

PATHWAY TO GOD

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A. C. P. R.'s

Dr. R. D. Ranade College of Yogic Sciences & Research



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Prayer

to Lord Rudra Shiva

(Stanzawise Translation in English)

चमक अनुवाक तिसरा/ Third Chamak Chapter

शं च मे मयश्च मे प्रियं च मेऽनुकामश्च मे
कामश्च मे सौमनसश्च मे भद्रं च मे श्रेयश्च मे
वस्यश्च मे यशश्च मे भगश्च मे द्वविणं च मे
यन्ता च मे धर्ता च मे क्षेमश्च मे धृतिश्च मे
विश्वं च मे महश्च मे संविच्च मे ज्ञात्रं च मे
सूश्च मे प्रसूश्च मे सीरं च मे लयश्च म ऋतं च
मेऽमृतं च मेऽयक्ष्मं च मेऽनामयच्च मे जीवातुश्च
मे दीर्घायुत्वं च मेऽनमित्रं च मेऽभयं च मे सुगं
च मे शयनं च मे सूषा च मे सुदिनं च मे ॥३॥

Let the happiness be mine, let the plenty be mine, let the kindness be mine, let the pleasure be mine, let the desire be mine, let the satisfaction of mind be mine, let the welfare be mine, let the higher happiness be mine, let the residence be mine, let the success be mine, let the good fortune be mine, let the wealthiness be mine, let the restrainer be mine, let the preserver be mine, let the security be mine, let the steadiness be mine, let the world be mine, let the greatness be mine, let all round learning be mine, let the understanding insight be mine, let the convincing ability be mine, let the productive ability be mine, let the impliments of agriculture be mine, let the higher truth be mine, let the immortality be mine, let the freedom from diseases be mine, let the freedom from body fevers be mine, let the medicines be mine, let the long life be mine, let the freedom from enemies be mine, let fearlessness be mine, let the graceful behaviour be mine, let good sleep be mine, let there be sunrise with colourful twilight for me, let the day be good for me. ◆ ◆ ◆



Thus Spake Gurudeo...

God, devotee and the name of God constitute a veritable confluence as in the traditional Triveni-Sangam where Ganga and Yamuna are manifest while Saraswati remains hidden. i) Normally the devotee and the name of God are manifest while God remains hidden. ii) At a higher stage, the devotee and God are manifest while the name becomes unmanifest. iii) At the next stage, the name of God and the form of God remain manifest while the devotee goes into oblivion.



According to Jnaneshwar the moon on the fourteenth day of the bright half of the month is just short of the size of the full moon day, similarly to what extent only is the difference between God and the God realiser. Who can pronounce a judgement on such a matter without experiencing it?

The form we visualise is an index of our spiritual progress. To profit from the spiritual landmarks and intensity of our spiritual efforts, can be possible only in the case of an advanced Sadhak. If a person has the vision of saints at the time of meditation, it is due to his own merit. The saint is not concerned with that experience. This is true of visions also. Visions reflect the future in them and the reflected future comes out true. This also is due to the merit of the devotee who gets the visions. An aspirant should not put a blind faith in anything which he has not himself experienced.



EDITORIAL



Modern Science, the Concept of God and the Spiritual evolution of the Individual

In recent times, since last mid-century, scientists started developing theories about the vast universe, movement of the galaxies, whether the universe is expanding or contracting and the relation of this with the law of gravitation etc. They also developed theories regarding the smallest particles inside the atom. When they started looking into the origin of the universe, the question arose as to whether it started from a sort of nothingness, and if so, would again relapse into that state after some time. Will it be able to restart all over again? Definite answers to these questions and explanations to many phenomena are not available in the theories developed so far. Scientists had to introduce the 'principle of uncertainty' and 'the principle of exclusion' till the answers are found by future research. Scientist Stephen Hawking says, 'If there be a god, his work will be limited to giving a direction by his intervention in the behaviour of the vast universe or the smallest particle in the atom. Alternatively, the scientists have to accept a self-referral instinct in the entities or a sense of consciousness which is not favoured by them.

Most religions accepted the existence of an omnipotent omnipresent and omniscient Almighty God who controls and guides the vast universe as well as life on earth. He delivers men from their sins and damnation and obliges them with redemption.

Many scientists, biologists, physicists and others have recorded their observations as they went deeper and deeper into their analytical search for knowledge regarding the laws of nature the different phenomena in the universe, the structure of various animal bodies and the human body, they feel the presence of a 'Supermind' behind all these things and the superiority of the 'Supermind' is far beyond the imagination of the human mind.

In Ancient India, however, things were a little different. About 10000 to 25000 years ago, though the ordinary man believed in the Almighty God, the sages tried to know about this concept of God. They said, if God exists, they should be able to see Him face to face. Otherwise there was no point in believing in God. They went after this idea with a researcher's zeal. Their research was through deep concentration of mind resulting in Samadhi in a secluded place like a cave, undisturbed by the mundane happenings of the world. They soon discovered that God can not be seen by our ordinary eyes and their further research led them to the science of Yoga.

They found that some portion of the human brain lies dormant even for the whole life of man, unless it is nourished and developed by the power of Kundalini, also known as serpent power which first needs to be activated from its position in the sacral centre to travel towards the brain. They also discovered that man possesses not one but four bodies and the awareness of the inner bodies do not come to him unless the serpent power nourishes the essential centres of the brain. Their research soon led them to the processes to activate the Kundalini, raise its power to the brain and develop the dormant brain centres. When this happened, the mind got stilled and the consciousness entered the inner body. When this was achieved, the miracle towards which their whole research effort was directed, took place and

could, not only, see God face to face and could communicate with them through the silent language of telepathy, but also could see their past lives. They could see the various deities and elevated souls and communicate with them. The powers of the inner body, called the subtle body, to see, hear and apprehend are vastly superior to those of the gross body.

Between the human being with gross body and the Almighty God, there are a host of other beings or elevated souls in their subtle bodies as well as various deities. Many accomplished yogis had a vision of them and could also communicate with them. Adi Shankaracharya, though a firm believer in Advaita and One God, compiled a number of verses in praise of various deities like Sharada, Amba, Shiva etc. whenever he had a vision of them. Ramkrishna Paramhans had asked, Tailang Swami, known as Prati Vishwanath in Varanasi whether there is one God or many. He replied that when in Samadhi God is one, otherwise many. Gondavalekar Maharaj had a vision of Ved Vyas when he visited Badrinath, so did Sant Dnyaneshwar also.

All this indicates that our modern theory of evolution which considers human being to be the crest of the evolutionary development is incomplete and overlooks the development beyond the human being with his gross body to beings with subtle body, mind and soul, which covers all elevated souls and deities.

Our sages were aware of the whole range of evolutionary development from the inanimate at the lowest rung to the Almighty God at the crest. Accordingly they planned the Hindu way of life for every individual and boasted that the Hindu religion aims at making a God out of man.

The progress of the individual towards Godhood through spiritual attainments is through the mind only. The power of the

mind is limitless and one should get directional over the mind and lead it in the right direction, by divesting it of all worldly desires, ambitions and ego and make it learn to remain still and concentrate with single-pointed goal. In Bhagwadgita, Shri Krishna says “ Manmana Bhava Madyaji Bhava’’, asking thereby to divest our mind of all thoughts and concentrate on Him alone.

The great of Maharashtra Saint Samarth Ramdas Swami directly advises the mind stressing the importance of mind in human existence. He says one should follow the path of devotion, which is the easiest way to attain God as it is in His very nature to reach His devotee. The mind should resist the temptation of women and wealth and concentrate on Him alone, which develops the limitless power of mind and leads to high attainments in spiritual progress. The saint then indicates a state of mind higher than the stillness and single point concentration and withdraw from the gross body and enter the subtle body. The mind takes away the consciousness from the gross body and enters the subtle body where the individual enjoys the supernatural powers of telepathy, television, clairvoyance and others as well as supreme Bliss. How does the mind attain the supernatural powers? When it withdraws from the gross body, it gets attached to the Universal Mind. “The Mahat”, and derives the superpowers from it. When this happens the man is overwhelmed with amazement and unable to realise what has happened. The experience is described by a saint as “The ant has flown to the sky”. An invisible spark from the individual flies up so high in the sky that he is unable to see it. When this happens, Shri Krishna’s promise in Bhagawadgita “ Yoga Kshema Vahamyaham” comes true and he becomes a man of God.

He becomes fearless and does any duty assigned to him by the Almighty through Himself, through a deity and his Guru.

Ramdas swami says, 'Nobody in the whole universe can afford to be inimical to such a person' (as he is the powerful protection of The Almighty Himself).

All this is possible through humane efforts and determination. The guru initiates a disciple or an aspirant into the spiritual path by giving mantra japa or something like a vision etc. But shaking out the dross of desires and inhibiting the essential virtues is to be done by the aspirant or disciple through his own initiative, determination and effort and cannot be done by blessings alone.

Modern science believes only what the eyes and ears of the gross body can sense while spiritual mysticism or the science of yoga depends on what the subtle body can see and communicate. The problem is that a great amount of self-discipline of the gross body and mind are required to transfer the consciousness to the subtle body which does not fit in the materialistic frame of modern Science & its research. Thus Modern Science and research through spiritualistic achievements remain in different compartments. Paul Brunton has said that material pleasures and material sciences cannot sustain the human race for long. It has to take recourse to spiritual science soon or later.

- P. D. Dharwarkar



Spiritual experience may not necessarily grow bit by bit, there may be a sudden explosion; we must keep waiting for it. When one meditates regularly, one may, all of a sudden, get a supernal experience of a high order. One's eyes should always be set on such an experience because such an experience is rather rare.

- Gurudeo Ranade

Eternity Compressed in Time : My Reminiscences of Shri Gurudeva

Having considered the super-sensuous experience of Mirabai, Tulasidas and Surdas, Shri Gurudeva comes to the mystical experiences of Gorakhnath, Dharamdas and Yari. Shri Gurudeva tells us that we witness a riot of mystical experiences expressed in the songs of these saints. Gorakhnath is one of the greatest founders of Yogic Mysticism in India. In spite of his Hatha-Yoga, he had reached a very high level of mystical experience. In his song ‘‘शून्य शिखर में सुरत लगाय देखो, निज में अलख बसाय बस्ती’’, he anticipates much modern physiology in his conception of the ‘शून्य शिखर’ or the lateral ventricle wherein the unseen Lord, ‘अलख’ remains seated. Secondly, the Ida and the Pingala, the left and the right nerves of the sympathetic system, are described by Gorakhnath as waving Chowris on the two sides of the invisible God. Then Surya and Chandra, the sun and the moon, are regarded as brilliant lights illuminating contour of His residence. As Shri Gurudeva makes it clear that in this context the sun and the moon cannot stand for the Ida and the Pingala because they have been mentioned previously. They stand for their original meaning of two brilliant lights. Further we are told by Gorakhnath that musical instruments such as drums, flutes, cymbals and trumpets are being sounded in honour of the great unseen Lord: ‘ताल मृदंग पवपवली बजत है। हृदय पर नौवत झडती॥’ In such a riot of light and sound the Lord of the seven seas or the Self is described

as taking a bath at the confluence of the two great Nadis under a shower of pearls : “मोतियन की बरखा झडती!” “Finally, we are told by Gorakhnath that rarely a saint can reach such a haven, not to speak of a ‘निगुरा’ or a ‘मनमुख’. He who follows his own whim has to pay the price of it, and can never be admitted in the transcendental region of the Spirit.” (Pathway to God in Hindi Literature, p. 242).

Dharamdas, in his poem ‘झरि लागै महलिया’, says Shri Gurudeva, “continues the language of the spiritual bath which we have come across in Gorakhnath. While Gorakhnath describes the spiritual bath of the Self in the lateral ventricle, Dharamdas describes the spiritual bath of the saint under the shower of ambrosial rain.” However Shri Gurudeva asks us to remember that Dharamdas like Gorakhnath, make the mention of all the three kinds of experience, namely, sound, light and mellifluous juice. In the beginning, says Dharamdas, the saint hears the rumbling of the cloud in the lateral ventricle, and then sees the glitters of lightning. Scientifically, we know that the glitter of the lightning precedes the rumbling of the cloud. But according to Shri Gurudeva, we cannot determine the order of the glitter of lightning and the rumble of the cloud so far as the region of the Spirit is concerned. In that region either sound or light may precede the other experience, or the two might even synchronise. Dharamdas further tells that a sudden indescribable wave of rapture strikes upon the cloud, which sends down ambrosial rain in which the saint bathes with great joy and devotion: ‘प्रेम अनन्द है साधु नहाय!’ When the saint has enjoyed the spiritual bath, the door of the lateral ventricle opens and darkness comes to an end, and there is illumination everywhere : ‘खुली केवरिया मिटी अँधेरिया’

Shri Gurudeva next comes to the song ‘झिलमिल झिलमिल बरसे

नूरा' composed by the Mohammedan saint Yari. The saint joins the other Hindu saints in his description of manifold experience of light, sound and form. Firstly, the saint experiences an all-pervading light, 'नूर जहूर भरा भरपूरा' and then begins to hear various kinds of Anahat sound. Yari makes a mention of 'भृंगनाद' : "भँवर गुँजार गगन चढ़ि गाजै," which reaches the top of the sky. Finally, Yari tells us that the mystic necessarily experiences a shower of pearls. Shri Gurudeva points the three onomatopoeic words 'झिलमिल', 'रुनझुन' and 'रिमझिम' used by Yari, which express photic, phonic and morphic experiences enjoyed by the spiritual aspirant. Incidentally, he makes a very significant statement in regard to the order in which spiritual experiences might occur to different spiritual aspirants. His point is that there is no fixed order in which photic, phonic or morphic experiences occur. Quoting the verse from the Shvetashvatara Upanishad on this topic of mystical experiences, namely, "नीहारधूमाकानिलानिलानाम्। खद्योत विद्युत्स्फटिक-शशिनाम् ॥" he points out that it first mentions the Sun, then the fire, the fire-fly, and the moon. But experience, in some cases, may occur in opposite manner. In fact, the author of this verse was concerned simply with providing a catalogue of mystical experiences rather than giving the order in which experiences occur to the spiritual seeker.

In his discussion of this song of Yari, Shri Gurudeva tells us that even this Mohammedan saint stresses the importance of Name (नाम) in the realisation of such an experience. Yari says, "I have resorted to the meditation on the immaculate Name which has resulted in my mystical experience. I, therefore, have found complete rest (विश्राम) In the Name of God :

"निर्मल निर्मल निर्मल नामा।
कह यारी तहँ लियो विश्रामा ॥"

Shri Gurudeva remarks. "We thus see how the immaculate

Name plays an important part in the experience of saints of all races and nationalities, whether Hindus, Muslims or Christians.” (Pathway to God in Hindi Literature pp. 245-46).

Coming to the peculiar experience of Charandas, Shri Gurudeva tells us that “God appears distinctly to the vision of Charandas.” “My experience of God is different from the experience of people worshipping in ordinary temples. In temples, we have a hazy and blind worship, where the deity does not appear to the vision :

“और देव जहें धुन्धली पूजा,
देवत दृष्टी न आवै।
हमारा देवत परगट दीसै,
बोलै, चलै, खावै॥”

“In my case the deity appears distinctly to my vision. My God eats with me, speaks with me and walks with me.” Shri Gurudeva remarks that it is a very peculiar kind of experience, which has not been stressed by many mystical writers. However, Namadeva, the great Maratha saint had that experience when God used to eat with him and speak with him. The experience of God as walking with oneself is stressed by mystics of other provinces also, such as Purandardas, Sarvajna, Jagnathdas and Tukaram. As regards the question whether God can speak with us and walk with us, Shri Gurudeva advises us to leave it to be decided between the saint and God. “It is only they who can speak about the veracity of the experience, and other people have nothing to do with it.” (Ibid. pp. 246-47). Shri Gurudeva gives highest credit to Charandas for his “conception of virtuous life as consisting the worship of God. Giving an account of his moral worship. Charandas says, the true method of worship by which God can be propitiated is to bathe Him with honour, anoint Him with love, to place flowers of sweet and

humble words on His forehead, and to make Him a continuous oblation of one's self."

(iv) Ekanath and Mahipati: These two Maratha saints have composed poems in Hindi also, which are of a high calibre. Shri Gurudeva tells us that Eknath stayed at Banaras to complete his commentary on the eleventh Skandha of the Bhagawata. So he must have earned proficiency in Hindi. Moreover, he must already become familiar with Hindi at his native place Paithan. Shri Gurudeva has given an exposition of Eknath's song "गुरुकृपांजन पायो रे भाई". Eknath says that he was fortunate to get the collyrium God's grace for his spiritual vision. It was ointment which enabled him to visualise things which could not be seen by the ordinary human eye. This collyrium enabled him to see God both internally and externally: "अंदर राम बाहर राम" Also, wherever his eye was cast he could see the form of God: "जहँ देखे तहँ राम हि राम". Shri Gurudeva points out the specific contribution made by Eknath to theory of mystical experience in his statement that God is capable of being seen in any state of consciousness: "जागत राम सोवत राम सपन में देखूँ आत्मराम". Finally, Eknath tells us "जहँ देखे तहँ राम सरीका", which might be interpreted to mean that Eknath was able to see God in his own image in the spirit of the Bhagawadgita "यत्र चैदात्मनात्मानं पश्यन्नात्म नि तुष्यति" or the Yoga Sutra "तदादृष्टः स्वरूपे अवस्थानम्". Another interpretation might be that Eknath was able to see God continuously.

Coming to the poem of Mahipati "साई अलख पलख में झलके", Shri Gurudeva says, "It might veritably be regarded as a perfect epitome of the growth of mystical experience. We are told by Mahipati, in the first place, about the nature of the spiritual path, then about the lamp posts on the way which an aspirant encounters on the spiritual journey, and then finally about the consummation of spiritual experience in beatific self-satisfaction.

As regards the spiritual path, Mahipati mentions five points. In the first place, the aspirant has to seek a Guru who may initiate him by putting his hand over his head. Shri Gurudeva here discards the prevalent belief that by placing his hand over disciple's head he passes on some magnetic influence to the disciple. Mahipati is speaking here about the spiritual hand of the Guru, and not the physical hand. Then the Guru imparts to him a two-syllabled Mantra : “दो अच्छर वीज पढाया”, which is the root source of all spiritual experience. Thirdly, the disciple is advised by the spiritual teacher to drive away all ideas which crop up in his mind during the process of meditation so that the Name of God takes root in it. In case the driving of ideas is not accomplished in the psycho-ethical manner, the disciple might ‘invert and revert his breath’ and concentrate on it, or else make his mind travel between the ‘मूलाधार’ and ‘सहस्रार’. When other ideas cease, the idea of God will take root in the mind of the disciple. Thus the disciple will be enabled to reach the Unmani state. The eyelashes will cease to function, and the unmoving eyes will remain focussed on the unmoving form of God.

Mahipati says that during his meditation the disciple will visualise several spiritual forms. He may be able to visualise ‘glitters of lightning, golden sparks, or multi-coloured peacock feathers’ (आगे पीछे मोरकी पॉखे). He may experience pearl-like forms, or stars or circles of light, which respectively represent Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Shri Gurudeva here comments that Mahipati does not make any mention of any forms of Anahat.

The cumulative result of these experiences, says Shri Gurudeva, “will be that the advancing mystic will begin to give thanks to the teacher, to the pathway and to God Himself. “Blessed be my spiritual teacher who has conferred his grace on me. Blessed be the pathway by which I have travelled. Blessed

be the Lord who has enabled me to visualise His form.” The mystic realises that his wanderings in the cycle of existence have ceased, that the rope of birth and death, by which he was hitherto tied, has been reduced to bits, and finally, that the Karmic prison-house in which he was shut up, has been broken to pieces and he has been admitted into the light of day. Indeed, there is no limit to his joy!

(To be continued)

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We know as we get up from sleep, that dreams are false and not real. One should feel the same way about the ways of world, to be false; then only one's soul will become 'Swaropakar'

- Shri Siddhrameshwar Maharaj



Where there is 'nothing' and you feel it to be zero, there is 'Atmavastu'

- Shri Ganpatrao Maharaj



No man can escape punishment for his sins.

- Shri Gurulingjangam Maharaj



The Jaina way of Life

Jainism is essentially an ethical philosophy. Knowledge for the sake of knowledge is not very much appreciated and approved by it. Knowledge of anything, if it is to be useful should help human beings to lead a life of enlightenment. Knowledge should culminate in right conduct. The goal of good conduct is salvation or *Kaivalya*. It consists in the attainment of perfection, and the consequent removal of all bondage. To say that the soul is in bondage is to admit that it ceaselessly moves in the cycle of birth and death, thereby undergoing untold suffering and misery.

The soul, in itself according to Jainism, is pure and blissful. It is inherently perfect. It has infinite potentialities within. It has infinite knowledge, infinite faith, infinite power and infinite peace. If so, the mute question is : how does it come to be bound? the 'why' and 'how' of bondage? The answer is very plain. Due to the obstacles caused by the *Karmic* particles, the infinite potentialities of the soul remain unmanifest. The *Karmic* particles actually penetrate into the soul. Thus according to Jainism, *Karmic* particles stand in the way of the soul's realisation of its potential perfection. This is bondage.

The next question in waiting is : what makes the *karmic* particles enter into the soul? The answer given by Jainism is : passions and cravings of the soul. How does the soul become a victim to these passions? Because of the net laid by *karmic*

particles. *Karmaṣ* are the sum total of the past life of the soul. The particles of *Karma* cloud, knowledge (*Jñānāvaraṇīya*); they cloud faith (*darśanāvaraṇīya*) ; They produce delusions (*mohaṇīya*) in the soul. In short, ignorance is the cause of all bondage. Ignorance of the true nature of the soul causes passions, and passions in turn, make the soul attract the particles of matter. The net result is bondage. Thus *Karma*, in its extremely subtle form, acts as the link between soul and matter.

How exactly the process or bondage operates? The answer is crystal clear. Due to anger, vanity, infatuation, greed etc. caused by ignorance, the influx of *Kārmic* particles into the soul begins. This is technically called *āśrava*. When the *Kārmic* particles actually enter into the soul, there results bondage. This is called *bandha*. If the soul is to become free, first of all, the stoppage of the influx of new *Kārmic* particles towards soul is a must. In other words, '*Kārmic check*' is invariable. This process of stopping the movement of *Kārmic particles* towards the soul is technically termed *Samvara*. Next the *Kārmic* particles that have already penetrated into the soul have to be extricated. Only then the soul can be free from the contact of *Karma*. This process of extricating the *Kārmic* particles from the soul is termed *Nirjara*. The soul, thus becomes free from all *Karmas* and hence it is said to be in a state of absolute perfection. This is called *Mokṣa* or *Kaivalya*.

Now, since bondage is due to ignorance and only with the removal of it, the soul can become free. And knowledge alone can remove ignorance. Therefore right knowledge is to be sought. Right knowledge is obtainable from the teachings of the omniscient *tīrthamkaras*. But the right knowledge is to be paved through respect for truth, which Jainism calls Right faith.

Thus in order to restore the soul to its pristine purity,

Jainism, strongly advocates a three-tier *sādhana* consisting of three precious principles of life. They are : (1) *Samyag darśana* (Right faith) (2) *Samyag Jñāna* (Right knowledge) and (3) *Samyag caritra* (Right conduct)². These are called the *tri-ratnas* or three jewels of life.

Right faith consists in unshaken faith in the Jaina scriptures and their teaching. The *sādhaka* should have right faith. He should be free from false convictions, doubts and scepticism which thwart his spiritual growth. It is most indispensable. It consists in showing respect for truth (*sraddhā*). This faith is not in-born and spontaneous, it should be acquired by learning and culture³. *Kārmic* tendencies that cause disbelief should be allayed.

Right knowledge is knowledge of the principles of Jaina religion and philosophy. It consists in detailed cognition of the real nature of the ego and non-ego and is free from doubt, error and uncertainty as *Dravya saṃgraha*⁴ puts it. It strengthens faith in the teachings of the *tīrthamkaras*, by supplying a rational base.

Right Action consists in translating one's belief and knowledge into action. Mere faith and knowledge are useless unless they are put into practice. Therefore Right action is the third indispensable condition for attaining *Kaivalya*. It also consists in refraining from wrong and performing what is right.

Right action ordains monks to perform *pañca-mahā-vratas* and laymen (Śrāvaka) *pañca-aṇu-vratas*. The five great vows are *ahiṃsā* (non-injury), *satya* (truthfulness) *asteya* (non-stealing), *Brahmacarya* (celibacy) and *aparigraha* (renouncing the world).

Ahiṃsā is non-injury in thought, word and deed. It is not just negative but a positive virtue also. It consists, in its positive

aspect, in selfless love for others. It is behind the noble ideal: 'respect for life wherever found.'

Satya is abstinence from falsehood. It consists in speaking what is true as well as pleasant and good. This is an indispensable aid to moral progress. It is *sūnṛta*.

Asteya is abstinence from stealing. What is not given is not to be taken. It is based on the idea of sanctity of property. It is logically inseparable from the vows of *ahimsā*. *Brahmacharya* is abstinence from self-indulgence. It consists in giving up *Kārma* of every form - external and internal, subtle and gross, direct and indirect.

Aparigraha is abstinence from all attachments to sense objects. Attachment forces the rebirth. For liberation, non-attachment (*vairagya*) is a must.

Jaina ethics is severely ascetic puritanic and rigorous. It is the test-dose of monkhood. However for laymen instead of *brahmacharya*, chastity (*sheela*) is insisted upon; and instead of *aparigraha* contentment, that is, limit to one's wants, (*tripti*) is ordained; the other three vows, viz. *ahimsā satya* and *asteya* remain the same for laymen.

What is important to note here is that, Jainism gives utmost care to social side of ethics in addition to its emphasis on the development of one's personality. Social and tolerant side of Jaina ethics is a worthy concept to be reflected upon. One Jaina prayer runs thus : "Let the king be victorious and righteous. Let there be rain in every proper season. Let diseases die and famine and theft be nowhere. Let the law of the Jaina give all happiness to all the living beings of the world."

Right faith, Right knowledge and Right action in their togetherness, bring out liberation. The soul attains omniscience

(*Kevala Jñāna*). It transcends good and bad and attains freedom. It has all perfections in the state of *Kaivalya*. It attains infinite knowledge (*Anantha Jñāna*), infinite faith (*anantha sraddhā*), infinite power (*anantha sakti*) and infinite peace (*anantha śānti*) what is called the fourfold perfection (*ananta catuṣṭaya*). It becomes an *Arhat* and a *Siddha*.

Thus it is the ideal man that is the ideal of Jainism. What impresses one in Jainism is its respect for life, avoidance of injury to life and respect for the opinion of others. It is catholic and tolerant. It is a religion of self help.

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4. *Dravya Samgraha*, Verse 42.
5. Quoted by Prof. M. Hiriyanna, in his 'Outlines of Indian Philosophy' (Allen & Unwin) p. 167

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Philosophy of Life in Bhagavad - Gita -2, 3, 4

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Introduction

We are trying to understand the Philosophy of life in Bhagavad Gita through various terms used and explained in various stanzas of Bhagavad Gita and by Gurudev Ranade in the Dhyan Gita as compiled by him from the selected verses from Bhagavad Gita.

Nature of the Self - जीवस्वरूपवर्णनम्

The nature of the Self - जीवस्वरूप - is explained in various stanzas of the third chapter of Dhyan Gita (termed as DG hereafter) - the selected stanzas from chapters fifteen, four, two, eight, five, fourteen and six of the original - Bhagavad Gita termed as BG hereafter.

It is first stated that जीव - Self is a part of the Absolute - the God and is an eternal spark of it. (BG 15-7). The wise sages and yogis can directly visualise the stay and departure of Self. (BG 15-8-11). It is also explained that Jeeva passes through many lives but does not remember the past lives but God does so (BG 4-5). It is further explained that death is a mere change in the body and is like the change one passes through childhood, youth and old age) (BG 2-11-13). The soul abandons old bodies and puts on new ones (BG 2-22). The thought at the time of

death determines the further course, as is explained further. (BG 8/6, 8-13). If one meditates on God throughout his life and as a result also at the time of death, he reaches the supreme divine. He attains that existence in which he is ever absorbed and therefore thinks of that also at the time of death. The one who thinks of sensual pleasures or other kinds of thoughts throughout the life he takes life only for that purpose in the next life and the cycle of life and death continues. But one who believes in God and always thinks of God through out the life never returns. (BG 5/17). Those who are solely attached and devoted to God through out the life attain Him (BG 2/72). In case of those who believe in God but do not make adequate efforts in one life, continue the efforts in further lives and ultimately reach Him (6/37- 45).

In the worldly life one does not recognise his original divine nature and his senses drive his mind outwards towards various pleasures. Really they are very temporary pleasures and their nature is never satisfying so he continues from one to another. This takes him further away from his divine nature and therefore he falls in the trap of the cycle of birth and death. On the other hand if he remembers his divine nature and tries to direct all his life towards it soon attains the divine nature. Many enlightened souls, saints, have explained this in their teachings but human nature is as it is.

Practical View

Generally we are entangled in the worldly responsibilities and many think that they can get happiness by striving hard to progress in material wealth, with better health etc. There are some who think of the transient nature of the so called sensual pleasures and the material wealth etc. Many are also dissatisfied in the heart but to cover that, they turn more outwards to pleasure

seeking, hoping one day they will get over the feeling of dissatisfaction. That never happens and people spend most of their time in the outer world activities. Only a few think with a detached mind, that all this is transient, temporary and try to seek something that can give them the proper direction. Many even seek the advice of a Guru at the instance of some others, but do not make efforts with full heart as per the directions stipulated, really speaking very few get a proper Guru and a proper advice. Gita is telling us that if one makes his only mission to achieve divine and continues till the end of this life he will certainly attain the divine. How to lead such a life while carrying out one's duties is discussed later.

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Introduction

We are trying to understand the Philosophy of life in Bhagavad Gita through various terms used and explained in various stanzas of Bhagavad Gita (BG) and by Gurudev Ranade in the Dhyan Gita (DG) as compiled by him from the selected verses from Bhagavad Gita.

Transcendence of the three Gunas - निस्त्रैगुण्यविचार

Every thing created is bonded by three Gunas the qualities born from *Prakriti*, *Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. These three *Gunas* are the products of Nature. The immortal Self is fastened down by them to the body. The *Sattwa* is illuminating and health giving, still it binds with attachment of happiness and knowledge. *Rajas* is a source of desires and is full of passion of thirst and attachment, it binds the embodied soul through attachment to action. *Tamas* is born out of ignorance and it deludes all creatures and binds the embodied soul through attachment to inertia, sloth and sleep (BG 14/5-8).

The growth of the three Gunas has different results. When Sattwa is predominant, the senses and mind are illuminated by knowledge. When Rajas is predominant, greed, activity (restlessness) and desire, discontent and longing spring up. When Tamas is predominant it results into indiscrimination, darkness, stagnation, carelessness and delusion in the mind. The Sattwa dominant rise upwards, the Rajas dominant remain in the middle and the Tamas dominant descend down into lower nature (BG 14/11-18).

Functions of the Gunas - *निस्त्रैगुण्यविचारः* :

The functions of the three Gunas is also different in accordance with the nature of each of the Guna as described under different headings below.

Knowledge - *ज्ञानम्* - Sattwik or pure Knowledge is the one with One Imperishable Being is seen in all existences - the undivided in the divided (unity in diversity). Rajasik or passionate knowledge is the one in which different entities of various kinds are seen or inferred in all the beings, different existences possessing different characteristics. Tamasik or slothful knowledge is the one which clings to single effect or object as if it were the whole and which is without any reasoning, irrational, unreal and narrow. (BG 18/20-22).

Happiness - *सुखम्* - Sattwik or pure happiness is that which is poison like in the beginning but nectar like in the end and which springs from the clear knowledge of the soul. The Rajasik or passionate happiness is that which arises from the union of senses with their objects and which is nectar like in the beginning but poison like in effect. The Tamasik or slothful happiness is that which deludes the soul in the beginning as well as in the end, and which arises from the sleep, sloth, folly and carelessness (BG 18/37-39).

Intellect - बुद्धि - Sattwik or pure intellect distinguishes between worldly life and spiritual life, between paths of work and renunciation, between duty and non-duty, between what is to be feared and what is not to be feared, and is clear about bondage and liberation. The Rajasik or passionate intellect does not properly understand what is right and what is wrong, what should be done and what should not be done. The Tamasik or slothful intellect is overtaken by ignorance and considers wrong as right, takes a perverted view of all things (BG 18/30-32).

Doer - कर्ता - The Sattwik or pure doer is free from attachments and egoism and is endowed with firmness and zeal, he is unaffected by success or failure. The Rajasik or passionate and greedy doer is harmful, cruel and impure, he seeks the fruits of his action and is affected by joy and sorrow. The Tamasik or slothful doer is uncontrolled, deceitful, malicious, destructor, lethargic, dejected and procrastinating. (BG 18/26-28).

Food - आहार - The Sattwik or Pure food promotes longevity, vitality, strength, health, happiness and cheerfulness and is sweet, and is gentle, nourishing and agreeable. The Rajasik or passionate or excitable food is bitter, sour, salted, very hot, pungent, dry and burning and brings about pain, grief and illness. The Tamasik food is spoiled, tasteless, putrid, stale, repelent, and also unclean. (BG 17/8-10).

Penance - तपस् - The Sattwik or pure penance (of the body, speech and mind) is practised with utmost faith by men of self-control, purity and openness with no desire for fruit. The Rajasik or passionate penance is performed for gaining respect, honour and worship and for the sake of mere show and is unstable and uncertain. The Tamasik or slothful penance is performed with a deluded understanding by men of self-torture or with the object of destroying others. (BG 17/17-19).

Charity - दानम् - That charity or gift is Sattwik or pure which is made with a pure sense of duty with no expectation or any return from it, and with due regard to the place, time and person. The charity or donation with a calculated gain in return or with a desire for fruit, and with reluctance is a Rajasik or passionate donation. Charity or donation with disrespect or even with insult, at improper place and time to unworthy persons is Tamasik or slothful.

Renunciation - त्याग - To abandon the action which is obligatory as one's duty through delusion is a Tamasik or slothful Renunciation. Renouncing any action because it is painful, through physical suffering is a passionate or Rajasik renunciation. He who performs a prescribed action purely from the sense of duty, renouncing all attachment and fruit is a Sattwik or pure renunciation. (BG 18/7-9).

Predominance of Gunas - गुणवर्चस्वम् - Even wise men - ज्ञानी in conformity with their natural qualities. Restraint can not do anything in this respect (BG 3/33).

Nothing - no creature exists on this earth or even among the Gods in heaven, which is free from the influence of the three Gunas which are born out of the Nature. (BG 18/40).

Transcendence of the Three Gunas - निस्त्रैगुण्यम् - Transcending the Gunas can be achieved only through steadfast Yoga of Devotion. By transcending the Gunas which are the root cause of the body, the residing soul in the body becomes free from the miseries of birth, old age and death and attains the timeless, blissful state. (BG 14/20). Being established in Atman, he is unaffected by pleasure or misery. He regards clod of earth, stone and a chip of gold as of same significance, does not differentiate between agreeable and disagreeable, treats censure and praise equally (worthless) (BG 14/24). He treats honour and dishonour, friends and foes alike. He abandons the beginning of all egoistic

or selfish actions. Such a person is said to have transcended the three Gunas. (BG 14/25). And he who worships God with steadfast Yoga of devotion, rises above the Gunas and becomes fit for attaining God. (BG 14/26).

Practical View

Transcendence of the three Gunas - *निरत्रैगुण्यविचार* : is very important and is an ideal aim for a sadhaka on the spiritual path. Man is always affected by happiness - sadness, rise of passion and anger, different desires etc. If he is entangled in all these and further only in the day to day struggle for existence and working for it, he will always remain away from the main goal in life of attaining peace, bliss and satisfaction. All the obstacles mentioned will come in the way of his path of devotion and establishing his link to the Ultimate Reality or God.

In the context of the all the details under different headings such as the bonds, the growth and functions, the predominance of the Gunas explained above, one has to examine his own nature. It would help to examine one's own working and behaviour to know where one fits in, to know as a predominant type of one of the Gunas with the others mixed in certain proportion. It is also to be noted that though one has a generally predominant character of a Guna or a mix of it, at different times of the day, changing dominance of one of the three is also observed. With all such observations one can initiate efforts to transform himself to overcome the influence of *Maya* (as in *Vedanta*) or the *Trigunatmak Prakriti* (as in *Sankhya* philosophy) to become a pious and worthy person on the pathway to God and also lead a satisfying, peaceful and joyful life while he exists in this world.

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Introduction

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Bhagavad Gita through various terms used and explained in various stanzas of Bhagavad Gita (BG) and by Gurudev Ranade in the Dhyani Gita (DG) as compiled by him from the selected verses from Bhagavad Gita.

Moral Preparation for better life here and hereafter

Everyone wants to lead a happy life in this world and also in the life hereafter. One aspect for this purpose was discussed earlier under the title 'Transcendence of the Three Gunas'. Another important aspect is the moral preparation which consists of two sub headings

- a) Developing what is good or helpful for the better life.
- b) Giving up what is bad or harmful and

Here again the temporarily good but finally harmful - 'प्रेयस' - and good for now and also in the end 'श्रेयस' has to be considered in details. Dhyani Gita gives the suggestions in various stanzas of Bhagavadgita in two chapters, under the titles 'Destruction of Arch Enemy' - 'प्रधानरिपुनिर्दलनम्' and 'Development of Virtues' - 'सद्गुणसंशीलम्' (chapter V and chapter VI of DG). The virtues are also presented under two different sub-heads 'Individual Virtues' and 'Social Virtues'. We try to understand these suggestions of Gita under the two headings mentioned above and can try to derive lessons for our living pattern.

(a) Giving up what is bad or harmful

Gita advises to give up desire which is really our enemy because it envelops knowledge and impels even the wise to commit sin. Desire - 'काम' - which is also anger - 'क्रोध' - which springs from Passion - begotten from *Rajo Guna*, is a monster of greed and sin and hence is our enemy. It envelops our wisdom, like a smoke envelops the fire. (BG 3-38, 38).

Gita also tells us that the seats of desire are the senses, the

mind and intellect, with their aid it tempts the embodied - 'जीव' - by veiling his wisdom. One should therefore control his senses to destroy the enemy who is sin incarnate, destroyer of knowledge and realisation. (BG 3-39, 40).

It is further stated that senses are superior to the body, mind superior to the senses, and intellect superior to the mind and the one transcending the intellect (illuminating and energising all the senses, mind and intellect) is the Self (This is the revelation by probing within, from gross to more and more subtle levels of existence) (BG 3-41, 42).

It is warned that Hypocrisy of brooding over the objects of senses, 'मिथ्याचार' - by controlling the senses is a sin (BG 3-6). The chain of unrestrained musing over the objects of senses, - 'विषयध्यानप्रणाली' - developing an attachment for them and then a desire for them and anger from the desire, anger to infatuation, loss of memory, ruin of reason to ruin of the person, is thus very dangerous. (BG 2-62, 63).

Gita also mentions that this enemy of desire cannot be destroyed except through Self-knowledge 'आत्मज्ञान', (BG 3-43) Atman being superior as stated above. (3-42). Even if a person turns away from sense objects his inner longing - the relish - 'रसः' cannot be destroyed without the vision of God. Hence one has to strive hard and do his best to secure the same. (BG 2-59).

Gita thus leads to the situation how a person can obtain peace and bliss by self control securing a clear vision, ending all his sorrows and establishing him firmly in God. It is warned that without meditation and devotion, there is no peace and no happiness without peace. (BG 2-64, 65, 66).

A supreme Goal of freeing oneself from desire or lust, anger and avarice and achieving one's spiritual welfare and attaining

the highest ideal - 'परमगतिः' is possible assures Gita by abandoning lust, wrath, and greed into the threefold gate of the hell of self-destruction. (BG 16-21,22).

'Development of Virtues' is to be discussed in the next article.

Practical View

We can compare the life of a person who is running after various material things and sensual pleasures and a person who is contented and happy with what he gets after doing his legitimate duty to the best of his ability. For the former, there is no limit in running after material wealth as he is never satisfied and wants more and without recognising how much he can enjoy with the limitations of his body and circumstances. It has to be analysed as to how much one can eat, wear, use and store. Overdoing in everything, attracts many problems such as illness, loss, jealousy of others, thefts etc. On the other hand the person who is moderate in eating, in acquiring objects for his use etc. - 'युक्ताहारविहार' (BG 6-17) - and who is contented in whatever he earns after doing his best in his duty, for him the happiness and peace of mind are certain. We can see many examples of both such types all around us and choose our own path in our own life. Leading an unostentatious life, living within the available means and after all the duties are performed, utilising all the available time for one's spiritual progress (like meditation etc.) as per the advice of Gita is the solution to many of the problems faced in the society today and the starting point is giving up all that is bad or harmful to our progress as indicated in various stanzas of Gita quoted above.

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Social Transformation Consummating in Spiritualised Society

“**W**e all who have a common uplifting ideal shall unite; and in this union and by this union we will face and overcome the attacks of all opposing forces of darkness and devastation. In union is the strength, in union is the power, in union the certitude of Victory.”

[The Mother - Bulletin XV : 2 (April 1963), p. 73]

Since the collective consciousness of the present Indian society comprises multiple layers of consciousness from the infrarational stage to rational stage and then on to supra rational stage, social transformation consummating in spiritualised society is a stupendous task.

Sri Aurobindo explains the social evolution as : “We have seen that there are three steps of the social evolution or, generally, of the human evolution in both individual and society. Our evolution starts with an infrarational stage in which men have not yet learned to refer their life and action in its principles and its forms to the judgement of the clarified intelligence; for they still act principally out of their instincts, impulses, spontaneous ideas, vital intuitions or else obey a customary response to desire, need and circumstance, - it is these things that are canalised or crystalised in their social institutions. Man proceeds by various stages out of these beginning towards a rational age in which his

intelligent will more or less developed becomes the judge, arbiter and presiding motive of his thought, feeling and action, the moulder, destroyer and re-creator of his leading ideas, aims and intuitions. Finally, if our analysis and forecast are correct, the human evolution must move through a subject towards a suprarational or spiritual age in which he will develop progressively a greater spiritual, supra-intellectual and intuitive, perhaps in the end a more than intuitive, a Gnostic consciousness. He will be able to perceive a higher divine end, a divine sanction, a divine light of guidance for all he seeks to be, think, feel and do, and able, too, more and more to obey and live in this larger light and power." (SABCL Vol. 15, Human Cycle, p. 173).

Sri Kishore Gandhi of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry observes in this context : "But to make the mass of humanity, the common multitude, truly rational in its thought and life is so extremely difficult a task for evolutionary Nature that she cannot accomplish it without suffering prolonged setbacks and even breakdowns from which she has to retrieve the lost gains by a slow and laborious process." (Social Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo and the New Age - by Kishore Gandhi)

If social transformation has to lead towards Spiritualised Society of Sri Aurobindonian vision, 'Gramoddhar' & 'Gram Swaraj' constitute the basic requirement and infrastructure as envisaged by Gandhiji for material, social and cultural development of India with special stress on literacy, informative and reformatory as well as overall collective consciousness is part and parcel of the Integral Yoga, which is also termed as collective Yoga and its aim is not only individual realisation and transformation but also encompasses the establishment of gnostic communities across the globe. Present relevant statistics of our nation are as below :

	Total Population (in crores)	Total districts	Total villages (in lakhs)	Village population (in crores)	% rural population
i) India	108.5 (180.50.09. 80.4 as at 8.15p.m. on 4th Nov 2005)	593 (in 35 states incl- uding Union territories)	6.69	74.2	75%
ii) Karnataka	5.5	27	0.57	3.85	70%

The above statistics reveal as to how urgent it is for Sri Aurobindo Society to reach the rural population of 70 to 75% of the nation lifting up the infra rational society to rational one thorough proper education. It is here that the life-perfecting dynamic spiritual values are to be imbibed in the entire educational system from the 1st standard as elements of Integral education, envisaged by our Master and the Mother. Spiritual values embedded in the Indian culture, which has been enriched by the scriptures of our Rishis, have to be recovered in their essence as reiterated by Sri Aurobindo. Hence is the necessity for all centres of S. A. S. to open as many schools as possible in small villages in Karnataka comprising 27 districts, 176 taluks and 56,682 villages in particular and in the whole nation in general. Indian youths in general and rural in particular have to be appraised of this need of the hour. Dedicated organisers and field workers far more than writers and speakers are well grounded in life-perfecting dynamic spiritual values and Integral Education should make a dent into existing schools and apprise the teachers and students of the Integral Education in local language by frequent visits to these existing Schools. Sri Aurobindo Society State Unit, Karnataka has already been attending to the needful in this direction since more than an year with good results. This approach would be ideal for the evolution of collective consciousness of India towards Spiritualised Society.

Interactions between a highly evolved individual in

Spiritual consciousness and unevolved barbarians and large mass of population at the infra rational stage :-

It is a matter of strategic importance to bear in mind two things, namely, (1) Ultimately it is the population which determines the destiny of a nation. Nations like Lebanon, Bosnia, Chechnya, Macedonia and Cosavo etc, which are the standing examples of the conversion of the whole nation from traditional Christianity and other creedal religions into Islam due to the whole nation of Barbarous invaders. (2) The mass of population growing in infra rational stage e.g. Barbarians, Terrorists, fundamentalists, naxalites and religious fanatics resorting to forced conversions from one religion to other invade with their enormous physical strength a small group of spiritualised society and cultural society and can destroy the whole nation. It is true that there is an interaction between highest spiritual vibration emanated by a spiritualised individual or else a small group of such individuals and the negative vibrations emanated by large mass of infrarational society. In such interactions Might has been proved as Right instead of predominance of Right over the Might which has resulted in disastrous consequences.

Spiritualised Society comprises a group of individuals who have undergone psychic transformation (psychicisation) and spiritual transformation (spritualisation) by resorting to the constant triple labour of aspiration, rejection and surrender to the divine Mother. (vide 'The Mother' ch-2 by Shri Aurobindo).

In Sri Aurobindo's words "A spiritualised society would live like its spiritual individuals, not in the ego, but in the spirit, not as the collective ego, but as the collective soul. This freedom from the egoistic stand point would be its first and most prominent characteristic." (SABCL Vol. 15 p. 239 & 240).

"A spiritualised society can alone bring about a reign of individual harmony and communal happiness or, in words which,

though liable to abuse by the reason and the passions, are still the most expressive we can find, a new kind of theocracy, the kingdom of God upon earth, a theocracy which shall be the government of mankind by the Divine in the hearts and minds of man." (SABCL Vol. 15 p. 172).

Rural development (Gramoddhar & Gram Swaraj): In the light of above explanations, it is seen that the stupendous task of Sri Aurobindo Society, the major objective of which is social transformation consummating in spiritualised society is to focus its attention on priority basis towards the social evolution of nearly 70% of Indian population who live in 6.69 Lakh villages of the nation considering it as the Mother's service. The latest official statistics confirm that amongst these 6.69 Lakhs villages, more than one lakh villages do not even come under the 'education - system' undertaken by the govt. and non governmental bodies and they are mostly tribal villages. Nearly 10 crores of people live in these areas; a small private organisation called 'Ekal global Foundation' has started 'Ekal vidyalaya' movement for educating this infra rational society of India with special stress on training them in accordance with unique 'Sanatana Dharma' which has moulded the richest Indian culture aiming at spiritual perfection of man and which alone is the true nationalism of India as envisaged by Sri Aurobindo. No doubt, Sri Aurobindo Society is an unique spiritual organisation of global significance ever presided over by the divine Mother; but in its present growth in half a century of its existence, it is a very, very small organisation with very limited scope in money-power and man-power; Hence, to start with, a few typical and small villages across the nation can be taken for integral development of the collectivity from infrarational stage to rational stage and further from rational to suprarational stage with governmental and non governmental help in all truthful and honest ways. Obviously the work in service of the Mother has to cover a very wide spectrum of society - right

from fulfilment of the minimum needs of Pani, Roti, Kapada (PRK); Makan, Bijali, Sadak (MBS) to the huge mass of BPL (below poverty line) through self employment schemes in agriculture and cottage industries, literacy-campaign, higher education in health, sanitation, science and technology, resurgence of unique Indian culture founded on dynamic spirituality and awareness of Sanatana Dharma which is the Swadharma of India. (vide most important message given by Sri Aurobindo to Andhra University on 11, December, 1948 regarding India's future) Auroville, the international village in making has taken in its strides a number of local villages coming in its ambit for improvement right from infrarational stage of the local society and can hence be taken by all Sri Aurobindoneans as an emulative example of dedication of a whole village in service of the Mother towards the target of transforming infra rational society to rational Society and then to Suprarational or Spiritualised Society.

'Gramoddhar' and 'Gram Swaraj' have been the ideal vision of Mahatma Gandhi. In this direction some positive and emulative work has been done by some dedicated and highly patriotic individuals and small groups (NGO's) in some typical villages across the nation E. g. Chitrakut in M. P. as recently declared by our President of India. But, Sri Aurobindoneans have to add here one more and most important parameter, namely 'Gram-Atmoddhar' which is tantamount to spiritualisation of the village - community apart from spiritualised individuals. This synthetic and stupendous task in decades and centuries to come can be considered as the fusion of the visions of Sri Aurobindo and Mahatma Gandhi and as the Divine Will for the ultimate good of our Bharata - Varsha.

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Rāmagītā

(12)

कर्माकृतौ दोषमपि श्रुतिर्जगौ
तस्मात् सदा कार्यमिदं मुमुक्षुणा ।
ननु स्वतंत्रा ध्रुव-कार्य-कारिणी
विद्या न किञ्चिन्मनसाप्यपेक्षते ॥१२॥

The Śrutri has also further laid down that the non-performance of actions leads to faults i.e. sins. Hence a man desirous of salvation must go on performing actions. (At this stage, somebody says :-) Knowledge is independent (of action), and it independently accomplishes certainly its own task (of giving salvation) and hence it does not require anything else even in mind (in order to help it) (12).

Explanation :- According to Vedas, actions are obligatory and non-performance of actions' leads to faults, obstacles, etc. This means that a spiritual aspirant has to perform actions which will help knowledge to secure salvation.

Against this view, somebody argues :- This view is not correct. Knowledge can independently secure its object namely Liberation. It does not need the help of anything like action.



The above-mentioned argument is rebutted by the jñāna karma-samuccaya-vādin who then affirms his own view again in the following stanza No. 13

न सत्यकार्योऽपि हि यद्वध्वरः
 प्रकांक्षते ऽन्यानपि कारकादिकान् ।
 तथैव विद्या विधितः प्रकाशितै ।
 विशिष्यते कर्मभिरेव मुक्तये ॥१३॥

(The last statement mentioned in Verse No. 12 is) not proper at all. (The reason is :) Just as the sacrifice, though it is capable to truly accomplish its own aim, still requires/ expects some other (subsidiary) factors of action, etc. (kārakādi), so also knowledge, when it is accompanied (i.e. helped) by actions revealed by Vedic injunctions, becomes peculiar for i.e. becomes capable to secure, salvation. (Thus jñāna karma samuccaya is necessary to secure salvation) (13).

Explanation : The view that knowledge is indepent of action is not acceptable to jñāna-karma-samyccaya-vādin. To show that knowledge needs action he cites the example of a sacrifice. A sacrificial act, when it accomplishes its object, requires the help of some other¹ factors of action like fire, a sacrificer, subordinate parts, and so on. Likewise, knowledge, when it is accomplishing its object, requires action as the subordinate factor. Hence he thinks that knowledge with the help² of action can lead to emancipation.



The above - mentioned view of jñāna-karma-samuccaya-vādin is refuted by Rāmāgītā in Stanzas Nos. 14-29. Rāmāgītā holds that knowledge without any help from action secures salvation. Now Rāmāgītā first of all points out the contradiction between knowledge and action.

केचिद् वदंतीति वितर्कवादिन
स्तदप्यसद् दृष्ट-विरोध - कारणात् ।
देहाभिमानादभिवर्तते क्रिया
विद्या गताहंकृतिः प्रसिद्धति ॥१४॥

This argument (of the jñānā-karma-samuccaya) is proposed by some who adopt wrong reasoning. But it is not true at all, on account of contradiction which is observed (between action goes on increasing due to the sense of egoism/mineness on the body, while knowledge is obtained when the sense of egoism is destroyed (14).

Explanation : The upholders of jñāna-karma-samuccaya are here called vitarka-vādins-arguing in wrong way. And hence their view is not correct.

Rāmagītā points out that the combination of action and knowledge is impossible, because there is contradiction¹ between them. The contradiction between them is this : So long as a man thinks himself² to be the body he goes on performing actions. Thus the sense of egoism on the body is responsible for action and its increase. On the contrary absence of egoism is responsible for the accomplishment of knowledge.

Another aspect of contradiction is : Action leads to birth and rebirth (see stanzas Nos. 8,10), while knowledge leads to salvation which is absence of birth and rebirth.

(to be continued...)

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50th Anniversary Celebration.



Gurudev R. D. Ranade
(1886-1957)

Gurudev Ranade International
Forum (GRIF), Pune
In Collaboration With
Department of Philosophy
University of Pune
and

Academy of Comparative
Philosophy and Religion, Belgaum

International Seminar On The Concept of Ultimate Reality

6th June 2007

Occasion and Objective

An International Seminar on *Ultimate Reality, Its' Philosophical, Religious and Mystical Aspects* is being arranged on 6th June 2007, the 50th death anniversary of Gurudev Ranade at Pune. The Objective of the Seminar is to discover a common plane in all religions to enable humanity to come together and make the world a better place to live than what it is today as visualised by the Mystic Saint Philosopher Gurudev R. D. Ranade.

His Biographic Sketch :

Prof. R. D. Ranade was born on 3rd July 1886 at Jamkhandi, Karnataka, India. He passed his M.A. (Philosophy) from the Bombay University, standing 1st in the University and winning the Chancellor's Gold Medal in 1914. He had already started his spiritual journey from 1901 and followed it

continuously. He worked as Professor of Philosophy in Fergusson College, Pune and then in Allahabad University. He was Dean of the faculty of Arts for three terms. He also became the Vice Chancellor of the University. He was conferred Honorary D. Lit. in 1947 by Allahabad University for his unique contribution to the world of scholarship. By now he was already famous all over the world as an ideal teacher, distinguished scholar, author of several important books and a renowned mystic. His founding of 'Adhyatma Vidyapeeth' and his authorship of learned treatises on Comparative Philosophy and Religion were the outcome of his constant endeavour to know, experience and live the Truth. Dr. Radhakrishnan the Philosopher President of India had said about him that all others talk of Philosophy but Prof. Ranade lives philosophy. Ranade left his mortal coil on 6th June 1957.

His Cosmic Vision :

Gurudev Ranade was a mystic philosopher. He considered:

- The philosopher's supreme business is to bring about peace and harmony in the society, the state and the world at large.
- When a philosopher speaks about his spiritual experiences he is neither a Hindu, nor a Muslim, nor a Christian, he is a citizen of the world and as a matter of fact a citizen of the 'spiritual world'.
- The philosopher endeavours to realize the nature of the Ultimate Reality for himself and to see this is spread out into the society.
- The Mystic may be Philosopher but is not necessarily so. His mystic experience is sufficient for his own elevation into Divinity; but if he philosophises, he may raise thinking humanity into a Divine Kingdom of Ends.

Seminar Programme : The seminar will consist three sessions.

Two sessions will be for presentations from different religions and a third concluding session covering the presentation views of Gurdev Ranade on the subject and a summing up.

Speakers : Eminent national and international Scholars from various religions.

Eligibility For Participants : University/College faculty, Religious Heads, Seekers of Unity/Peace/Goodwill, Post Graduate level.

Seats : About 200, Selection on Merit. Registration forms be sent in advance to secure the seat.

Registration Fee : Participants to pay Rs. 100/- (Lunch, Tea etc. will be supplied). Fee may be paid at the time of Seminar but *all participants are requested to register their names in advance by mailing the enclosed form duly filled in.*

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SUPPORTERS OF THE GURUDEV RANADE INTERNATIONAL FORUM

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From India (Disciples of Gurudev Ranade from various states of India)

About Co-Sponsors Department of Philosophy University of Pune

The University of Pune is ranked among the top five Universities in India according to NAAC Accreditation. Eminent scholars as Prof. Naravane, Barlinge, Marathe and others headed the Department of Philosophy of this University. Indian Philosophical tradition is stronghold of this Dept. right from the beginning till today and is being taught at various levels. The Dept. also has a peculiarity of Vedanta and largest number of PhDs in Philosophy in India are from this Department

Academy of Comparative Philosophy And Religion, Belgaum

Gurudev Ranade conceived the ACPR in 1924 at Pune. In 1952, land at Belgaum was donated by Rajasaheb of Sangli and in 1952, Gurudev Ranade registered ACPR as a Public Trust in the Educational & Research category. Since then several publications and a quarterly Journal are being published and seminars arranged to further the cause. It has an All India Academic Council. It also has a rich library.

About Pune and climate in June

Pune an old cultural centre is now a modern metropolis with a population of over four million, an educational, industrial, cultural, administrative and Information Technology city. Pune is accessible by Air from Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore as also by Roads and Rail, from all sides. The climate in the first week of June is moderately hot (maximum temperature about 35°C) with monsoon season very soon to start, which is also an enjoying occasion.

-: Venue :-
Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Pune Kendra,
Shivajinagar, K. M. Munshi Marg,
Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Chowk,
Pune - 411016.

GURUDEV RANADE INTERNATIONAL FORUM
INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON
THE CONCEPT OF ULTIMATE REALITY
(PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION AND SCIENTIFIC MYSTICISM)
ON 6th JUNE 2007 AT PUNE
Proforma for Registration of Participants
(To be mailed in advance)

Name : _____

Addres : _____

Qualification : _____

Designation : _____

Institution : _____

Email/Fax/Phone : _____

Academic and Professional Background :

Note : Outside participants are to make their
own arrangements for their accommodation

An Explanation of Transmigration and Metempsychosis in Nimbargi Sampradaya

“**T**ransition from one state or condition to another; especially passage from this life by death is known as transmigration. ” (*Vide* Brown 1003 : Vol. II 3371-72). Metempsychosis is transmigration of the soul; especially the passage of the soul of a person or animal at or after death into a new body of the same or a different species (a tenet of Pythagoreans¹ and certain Eastern religions) (*Vide* Brown 1993 Vol. I, 1757). According to S. C. Sinha (1991 : 124) metempsychosis is the idea, found in Buddhism² and other religions originating in the Indian subcontinent³, that our souls have lived before in the bodies of other men or non-human animals, and that after death they will in due course be reincarnated into other human or non-human bodies. Put simply in the words of Prof. R. D. Ranade (1997:65), “Transmigration implies only the processs of soul’s passage from the body, but metempsychosis further implies the taking on of another body after the passage.”

In this article a modest attempt a modest attempt has been made to offer an explanation of transmigration and metempsychosis basically from the standpoint of Nimbargi Sampradaya and before taking the plunge into the subject-matter it is to be borne clearly in the mind that the eschatological and some other kinds of explanations in terms of heaven and hell are

beyond the scope of this article for want space.

To make the matter more intelligible it may be pointed out that in the present paper a humble effort has been put to find answers from the viewpoint of Nimbargi Sampradaya to the questions such as: (i) Is it a very rare thing to be born as a human being? (ii) Whether a person will be born again as a human being who has left in him some desire (good or bad) at the time of his death? (iii) Is it possible to put an end to the cycle of births and deaths?

Like most of the Indian saints, the founder of Nimbargi Sampradaya, the Saint of Nimbargi/Nimbargi Maharaj, too affirmatively declares that to be born as a human being is a rare blessing because this human life is a reward for some small act of benevolence and good conduct towards others while passing through innumerable lives in different forms such as *Andaj* (egg), *Jarayuj* (womb), *Swedaj* (perspiration), *Ubhji* (germination) (*Vide* for details Gajendragadkar, Bhagvat 1975: 27-28). In this context the Saint of Umadi - the ardent disciple of the founder of Nimbargi Sampradaya - states that one takes human birth when the sin and the merit become equal and to indicate that he used to gesticulate it through his hands as though they held the balance (*Vide* for details Kulkarni 1995:22).

According to the saints of Nimbargi Sampradaya, after one's death there are three prime possibilities depending upon passion or desire left in one's mind at the time of one's demise and spiritual attainment that a person has attained : (i) the person may be born as a non-human being; (ii) the person may be born as a human being; (iii) the person may put an end to the cycle of births and deaths.

"The excellent" says the Saint of Nimbargi. "should be passionless; for one is sure to be reborn if one has any attachment

to or resentment for any person at the time of one's death." (Gajendragadkar, Bhagwat 1975:88). The following three recorded incidents seem to support the saying of the Saint of Nimbargi.

The Saint of Umadi sounded a note of warning to his lady disciple - Gangabai Tikoti who developed too much of attachment towards her pet cat. The Saint of Umadi said to Gangabai, "Do you want to take the birth of a cat? Leave that cat beyond the stream." (Kulkarni 1995 : 23).

Sri Amburao Maharaj/ Baba and Laxman Bhadji are the disciples of the Saint of Umadi. Once at Rabakavi when Sri Baba started coming out of the room after finishing his bath he happened to see a cat which was running and remarked to Sri Laxman Bhadji, "This person (cat) was a great patriot, see" and laughed. Even though persons have done some remarkable deeds, if they have some passions left in their mind they take birth in the lower category of animals. This seems to be the idea suggested by Sri Baba (Kulkarni 1995:26).

Once when both the Saint of Umadi and Sri Baba were sitting together a serpent came over there. But Sri Baba remained silent thinking that it would go by its way. However, the Saint of Umadi said to Sri Baba, "That person (serpent) has come to bite you (in order to take revenge) Kill it-" (Kulkarni 1995:27).

The saints of Nimbargi Sampradaya plead that those who die after leading a sinful life and without caring for God-realization and saints cannot be born in their next birth as human beings. (*Vide* for details Kulkarni 1984:34). Of course, Nimbargi Sampradaya does not altogether rule out the possibility of human birth again to those who lead a meaningful moral life, and show respect to the saints, and some desire left at the time of death in

spite of their some advancement in spiritual life.

It is interesting to note an incident (that took place at Belgaum Railway station) in which Sri Baba predicted human life in the form of a king of a European in his (a European's) next birth. As there was enough time for the departure of a train at Belgaum railway station, Sri Baba and Bhadji after spreading a blanket on the platform sat together on it. Bhadji sang a few devotional songs and Sri Baba discussed spiritual matters with Bhadji. At that time a European holding his bicycle started looking towards Sri Baba only from a little distance. When somebody asked that European to what he was looking at, the European replied, "He (Sri Baba) is a *Valli (Satpurusha)*." Bhadji asked that European to come nearby but that European did not respond. He (the European) waited there till the departure of the train and saluted Sri Baba and then left the place. At that time Sri Baba said to Bhadji, "See, in his (the European's next birth, he (the European) will be born as a King (*Raja*)."

 (Kulkarni 1995:508).

A person who has made some spiritual progress and had left some desire in him at the time of his death can be born again as a human being and with respect to this there are a few concrete cases in Nimbargi Sampradaya that are worthy of consideration.

Sri R. P. Kulkarni (Ramanna) and Sri K. D. Sangoram (Baba Saheb) once went to meet Sri Baba and the following conversation took place among them :

Ramanna asked Sri Baba, "Baba Saheb says that he "sees" something. What is that? Sri Baba instructed Babasaheb to draw on a piece of paper with the help of a pencil as to what is "seen". Babasaheb drew the figure accordingly. On seeing the figure Sri Baba observed that it is all because of Spiritual merit earned by him in his previous birth and further additions can be put to it when he takes Divine Name and meditates on It. (Sri Babasaheb

Another following incident suggests how a single human birth is insufficient to attain great spiritual height.

On one occasion in 1913, Gurudeo Ranade - the disciple of the Saint of Umadi and Yashwant Rao Lele - a childhood friend of Gurudeo Ranade - sat together for meditation in one of the rooms of a *Wada* in Jamkhandi. But Lele got up from the meditation after an hour or so and saw Gurudeo Ranade who was nodding his head in the state of meditation. Gurudeo Ranade (Rama) came out of the room where he sat for meditation only after a long time. Lele asked Gurudeo Ranade, "Ramu, why were you nodding your head like that? What miracle was working in front of your vision?" Thereupon Gurudeo Ranade replied, "What can I tell you? Seven hooded cobra was in front of me. I was nodding my head the manner in which *Shesha* was nodding." Lele asked, "When you get such experience, why don't we?" Gurudeo Ranade replied, "It is the fruit of spiritual efforts of several births."⁴ (*Vide* for details Dabade 1997:40).

The Saint of Umadi used to say that *Atman* leaving one body and taking on another could be seen by the spiritually advanced persons. Albeit; I have not yet succeeded in tracing the incidents exactly corresponding to the above statement made by the Saint of Umadi, the following two cases I believe approximate to it.

The first son of Gurudeo Ranade was Venkatesh. Venakatesh died at a very young age. Once after the demise of Venkatesh, Gurudeo Ranade opened the door of a cupboard and took out two-three ornaments of Venkatesh from the box at Adhyatma Bhavan- Pune and showed them to Padmasri Kakasaheb Karkhanis and told, "These are Venkatesh's. The boy was very sweet. His eyes were very beautiful. His was

probably a Yogi in his previous birth. He has come and gone.” (Karkhanis 1077:82-83, Sangoram 1964:150).

The Saint of Nimbargi reached a great height in spiritual life and left his mortal coil on 27th / 28th March 1885. At the time of his *Nirvana*, the Saint of Umadi was there by the side of him and happened to “see” how shining bright light left the body of his spiritual master and merged in Lord Narayana. (Vide for details Kulkarni 2000 : 17-18).

Avatarikas (Incranates) are those Jnanis (God-realizers) who left their mortal coils with the sole desire of showing correct Pathway to God to people (Kulkarni 1995:64). To be more precise, those who have merged in formless spirit (*Nirakara Vastu*) and become one with it, by taking the form of human bodies become *Sadgurus* (spiritual leaders) and initiate the people with Divine Name. The Sadguru is one who has realized his identity with the hidden form of the *Atman* (*Guptarupa*). It is most difficult, after your transmigration through all species of life in your past births, to come across such a *Sadguru* and receive the Divine Name or spiritual initiation from him. (Vide for details Sangoram, Deshpande 1978:39). It is in this connection - the Saint of Umadi used to say time and again - that God has manifested in the forms of Rama, Krishna, Nimbargi Maharaj (Deshpande 1964:185).

The saint of Nimbargi takes the stand that it is possible for one to put an end to the cycle of births and deaths. The Saint of Nimbargi states, “Act as you speak and let this life be the last of its kind. Action means good conduct and speech means strictly the words of Sadguru” (Gajendragadkar Bhagwat 1975:36). Further the Saint of Nimbargi says, “Follow the precepts of the sages and saints of the past and this very human existence may veritably be the last” (Sangoram, Deshpande 1978:17). “You

will not suffer henceforth from any rebirth. You will be thoroughly identified with *Atman*.” (Gajendragadkar Bhagwat 1975:36). The Saint of Nimbargi goes on to tell us, “You may not reach great height in spiritual experience” (Gajendragadkar, Bhagawat 1975:98). “Even a glimpse of the spiritual atom (spirition) by a disciple is enough for his salvation after death.” (Sangoram, Deshpande 1978:45). “Thus if you extract Self from human body and see Him in this birth only, you will not be born again on this earth. There is no doubt about this.” (Gajendragadkar, Bhagwat 1975:98).

There is an incident which throws light on the above statement made by the Saint of Nimbargi. Smt. Parvatibai, the holy mother of Gurdev Ranade was blessed with the spiritual experience (She used to “see” Shiva-Parvati). Parvatibai passed away on 19th October 1918. At the time of her demise Sri Gurudeo Ranade was reading a few verses from Sri *Dasabodha* which contained the following description of Brahman - the Absolute : “Brahman is an immaculate, immovable eternal Essence. It is both vast and hollow like the sky. It can neither be made, nor held nor known, nor forgotten. It transcends the void and knows neither birth nor death.”

The pious mother of Gurudeo Ranade heard these significant verses and contemplated the Divine Name, when she left her body and merged into the Absolute. When the flames rushed from her funeral pyre, they brought about a great upsurge of emotion in the loving heart of Gurudeo Ranade and a powerful flow of tears. He had also got a spiritual experience there. He had the lustrous vision of *Śaśa* (a hooded serpent) dancing on the flames of the pyre. This vision assured him that his mother had attained the blessed state. (Deshpande 1963:49).

Finally, an answer to the question ‘as to whether those

who have been liberated can be born again' can be sought. It is said that such liberated souls may appear before the vision of a devotee. For instance, before his second marriage Gurudeo Ranade actually heard the following words of the Saint of Umadi in a vision: "I shall send the girl after initiating her. Do marry." (Deshpande 1963:55). Thereafter as per the plan of the Providence, the second marriage of Gurudeo Ranade took place on 1st June 1922 at Islampur, and after the marriage, he went to Inchageri. In that connection, he wrote a letter to Kaka Karkhanis on 14-6-1922. "On Sunday, 10th June 1922 at 4p.m. the second wife got the initiation from (invisible) Maharaj (the Saint of Umadi, from the Samadhi at Inchageri. Shri Maharaj has thus fulfilled the promise that he would initiate her with a Divine Name --- ----" (Deshpande 1981:158).

Suffice it to say in the end that the aforementioned allusions to different facets of transmigration and metempsychosis in Nimbargi Sampradaya provide some food for thought to those scholars who are interested in the subject.

Notes:

1. Pythagoras said he was born an ox in one of his previous lives. Also Jayatirtha who was regarded to have been born an ox of his master Madhvacharya in a former life, carrying on his back the philosophical manuscripts of his Master, which ultimately gave him the ability to comment on the great works (Ranade 1997:67).
2. Buddha remembers on his deathbed that in his previous life he was King Sudassana --- Maha Govinda --- and Mahlia-devva. We are told about 547 *Jataka* tales. Previous lives of monks and nuns are also narrated. (Vide Ranade 1970:118-19).
3. In ancient India, the belief in transmigration and metempsychosis is was deep rooted. In medieval India too saints like Kabir believed in the concepts of transmigration and metempsychosis. There are seven possibilities which Kabir predicates for the soul after the death of the body. With a rearrangement the possibilities may be said to belong to (i) The Eschatological realm - ghost; (ii) Ornithological realm - crow and parrot; (iii) Intermediate (between the bird and the animal) in the sense it flies like a bird and moves like an animal - monkey; and (iv) The mammalian realm - ox, ass and camel. These complete the seven possibilities in which a man may be born after death. This does not, however, mean that all categories of post existence are exhausted. Kabir is selecting these seven for illustration's sake (Ranade 1997:66). In modern India, saints of Nimbargi Sampradaya do subscribe to the doctrines of transmigration and metempsychosis.

4. Gurudeo Ranade visited once Sajjangad of Samarth Ramadas Swami. "Did you have any special experience there?" asked one devotee to Gurudeo Ranade. Gurudeo Ranade replied immediately "I felt that this place is a familiar one." (Sangoram 1964:180).

Once Gurudeo Ranade remarked in front of Dr V. H. Date of Rajasthan that some get spiritual experiences soon, while others in spite of their spiritual efforts do not get them. Is it not the ground to prove the rebirth? (Vide for details Patankar 2003:220).

In 1910, the Saint of Umadi camped at Banahatti along with Gurudeo Ranade (Ramaraya) in connection with spiritual propaganda. While taking his bath the Saint of Umadi remarked at Banahatti "Ramaraya, while expounding Pothi I conceive that there is no rebirth. But it is there."

To make the stand taken by the Saint of Umadi on this matter more explicit Sri G. V. Tulpule used to say that had the Saint of Umadi told about rebirths to the *Sadhakas* they might have abandoned in idleness their spiritual efforts in this life and thinking that the spiritual efforts could be deferred to their next births. (Patnakar 2003:220).

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Singing of devotional songs also has its own utility as it brings about moral preparation. There should not be any monotony in it. Prayer should not be mechanical, but heartfelt. With this end in view, Shri Maharaj had prescribed different devotional songs for different hours. Meditation should be accompanied with reading. Such meditational reading should be short. Whatever has been read before one goes to sleep at night should be revived and contemplated upon when one sits for meditation in the early hours of the morning. This helps warding off of stray thought. For such reading, selected passages should be written out. One may also recite devotional songs, that may appeal to oneself. In the process of attainment of God. Meditation on the name is like watering the roots of a plant.

- Gurudeva Ranade

The Secret of Success And Happiness

The Ancient Wisdom. The Spiritual Heritage of India

Introduction

Whenver the question of the 'soul' arises, we tend to dismiss it with a shrug of our shoulder and make a face that shows that we are conscious of our body and mind, but not the inner soul. Essentially, man is not only the physical body and mind that are considered matter, but, is also 'spirit' in its 'Soul'. Soul is the core. It is the centre and, practically, everything has a core in this Universe. The earth has a core, the Galaxies have a core, and the Universe (millions of them exist) has a core. No wonder, man, too, has a core in his heart. This core is very important. The next questions are : what is this core and, how is it? There is no answer to these questions in science, for the simple reason that this core is just an empty space. The Veda says, "Tadrsushtvaa tadeva pravishat" ('Having created the creation, the Creator entered it') and "Naarayana vyavasthitaa shikhaayaa madhye" (The Lord, Naarayana has entered through the head and settled there'). The Creator entered through the Brahmarandhra and rests in the cavity of the heart'; it is the cavity, the core of the human beings, the thumb-sized empty space near the heart, that is the seat of the Lord. Hence, there is no room for any doubt that the Lord is within us. But this should

not be mistaken as 'we are all God'. The spirit of the soul is what we have imbibed from God, the supreme Spirit.

'God' as Supreme Spirit is, thus, not elsewhere but within us. The Upanishads say that, 'the Lord is nearer than our hands and limbs, and far, far away, from us - beyond the universe. He is there 10 inches above the Universe'. He holds the Universe from outside, as also, resides in the core of it. He is all pervasive and omnipresent. So far, no body has seen God, the Spirit, or the Universal Soul. It is not possible to see the Spirit, the divinity, the omnipotent self-existent supreme Soul. But, anybody can experience it, anytime. He is there within the body as the all-pervasive 'Praana' (the vital force), the 'Prajnyaa' (Consciousness), Budhdhi (the Intellect), and 'Ahamkaara, the 'Ego'! The 'Ego' is God Rudra.

Scientists have gone to the extent of reaching to the core of certain physical matter like the atom - the Uranium or the Hydrogen atom, and they have identified the subatomic particles such as the electrons, protons, and neutrons; they have subdivided these microscopic sub - atomic particles and have named the subtle high-energy as the 'bosanes', Firmiones, and the 'hadrons'. These are the basic materials, particles of matter exerting their forces of attraction and repulsion. Each of these atoms has its own characteristic properties of matter such as valency, specific gravity, mass, and density, and other properties and possess distinctive behaviour. The latent power of the atoms that possess certain electromagnetic properties, or atomic energy, has been successfully harnessed to produce electricity in atomic reactors. The TNT and the RDX, and such other highly explosive chemicals, or Bombs made of these explosives, highly dangerous - of several TNT (potency), have been produced and tested. A number of nuclear tests have been conducted in the deserts of

Nevada US end in the recent past, we have seen the Tests conducted in Pokhran in the Thar desert, in India, as well as the numerous nuclear tests conducted by Pakistan, France, China, Russia, and other countries in an open, or clandestine manner, on ground or under- the - sea. These nuclear tests are cited here as examples to show that the hidden energy in atom can be trapped and harnessed. The Scientists have successfully harnessed atomic energy and have successfully used it in nuclear medicine, agriculture, and various other fields. But, the effort to find the source of this energy and the secret behind its creation remains elusive. Even the Veda that is supposed to hold the key remains a secret. However, there are unmistakable clues to guide us in this matter and many Sages of our own times like Sri Ramana Maharshi, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda, and Maharshi Mahesh Yogi, have clearly explained it.

The Universe started in a state of perfect simplicity. The design of this Universe comes from that dimension of the ultimate cause ('Kaaranasya Kaaranah') and simplicity. It is 'spiritual' in nature, rather than material. Thus, the material is the 'vyakta' (the manifest) of the 'avyakta' (the unmanifest) spiritual. The blue prints of the Universe and all the life forms within lie in the Vedic Literature. Srimad Bhagavat Purana gives an elaborate description of the origin and evolution of the Universe. Sri Krishna narrates the story of the evolution and shows the ways and means of experiencing His presence in Bhagavad Gita.

According to the Vedic Literature, as the supreme Creator creates the cosmos, the creative potency descends down among other celestial beings like Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshvara, who are created with designated powers such as creation, protection and dissolution, respectively. These three Supreme

Powers are called the Trinity. Besides, there is the Supreme Ruler of the Universe called Ishvara. Many other demi-gods have been created and assigned special powers. There are in all 36,000 demigods to look after the departments of the three types of human beings (taamasic, raajasic, and sattvic) and their needs and desires; each of the senses (Jnyanendriyas) and sense organs (Karmendriyas) have a million desires and these are fulfilled by the Savitru Devatas (DemiGods). Thus, the Supreme Lord who has created the Universe, also has arranged for a proper care and up-keep of his creation. Not only the Hindu mythology, but the Greek mythology as well, depicts the same story. Hence, the supreme Brahman is indirectly the cause of the causeless, who manifests as Purusha, and then as Prakriti (or Pradhaana), and then on as the numerous Gods, Demi-gods (Devatas), and the like, who assist the Supreme Lord in manifesting the material worlds. Brahma becomes 'Prajapati' only after he created the objective world. Brahma narrated the ways and means of living a life of fulfilment to his first son Atharvan, that has come to be known as the Atharva Veda.

Brahma created Sarasvati, the Goddess of Learning, in the sense, that man started talking - uttering syllables of the alphabets that conveyed meaning; the words came out of the sounds of alphabets came out of the different parts of the body such as the stomach, the heart, the throat, the tip of the tongue, and the movement of the lips. These sounds expressed signs and sounds to convey images and impressions as and when the thoughts, or the chitta vritti, vibrated with different wave-lengths, or intensity and frequencies. Sarasvati is believed to be born out of the navel in the Lotus flower-conveying the meaning that the first letters of the alphabets emanated from the stomach, say with heavy breathing. The three letters 'A', 'U', and 'M' are the three types of letters that emanate from different parts of the body that

make the alphabets complete. The alphabet 'A' is uttered with the mouth open, 'U' emanates from the throat, and 'M' is pronounced with lips closed. The letter 'A' stands for Brahma, 'U' for Vishnu, and the letter 'M' for Maheshvara - the Trinity. Thus, these figurative expressions are very clear indications of the orderly process of creation. Thus, it is discernible that there is a divine plan, and then, there is a divine architect who has designed this Universe, who stays outside the universe.

The process of creation, 'srushti' has emanated from or proceeded from what is called 'spand', the impulses and mild currents that formed into waves. It is the vibration-of different frequencies, intensities, and wave-lengths, that has triggered the process of transformations. The Vibration of spiritual energy turned into, or created, the material energy due to the changes in frequency. The Invisible energies compressed between GAPS, the space, between the charged particles of energy are, now, believed to be the uncaused cause of the material objective world. In this sense of the term, the stellar matter - of clouds of dust, already existed in Spirit. The material objects of the Universe are mere transformations of the primordial matter that already existed as spiritual energy. It created the dimensions of causality, time, space, and pervaded everywhere as Pure Consciousness. Hence, it is the 'God's Will - the 'cit' (the chitta Vrittis), the thought force that caused 'spand' - impulses and tremors (Kampana), the Vibrations, and expansions and contractions that ultimately created the material objective world.

The energies of matter and spirit are the energies that vibrate at different frequencies and manifest on different levels. Both spirit and matter originate from the same source of Consciousness- the Pure Consciousness of the Supreme Being. While energy manifest in matter can be explained by the formula:

Energy = Mass multiplied by velocity square ($E = m \cdot c^2$), it is not possible to explain the spiritual energy by any formula (although some spiritual scientists have done it). The Supreme Spirit is of such a dimension that it does not come within the grasp of human mind! It is unbelievable that such a stupendous amount of energy exists in the Cosmos and some of it is also present in human mind-as the thought force. Ancient sages of India have demonstrated such powers as could be learnt from Garuda Purana, Padma Purana, Vishnu Purana, and other Puranas. The spiritual energy is far superior to material energy and the human being is capable of harnessing this source, as well. Transcending the lower level of Consciousness and attaining to supreme consciousness in 'Samaadhi' will enable anybody to reach that state of 'Brahm' and harness such large amount of energy! However, such spiritual seekers must be physically and mentally strong enough and capable of withstanding the impact of such energy.

Thus, the material plane is subservient to and pervaded by the unlimited spiritual energy is evident. The spiritual stratum, the datum line, is eternal, while the material basis is temporary-like the ocean and the waves. The material energy is directed and maintained by spiritual energy and disintegrated as and when required, or simply wrapped up to merge into the spiritual atmosphere.

Bhagavad Gita says, "Never the Spirit was born. The spirit shall cease to be never; Never was time, it was not. End and beginning are dreams." "God is the 'Spirit', and they that worship HIM must worship HIM in spirit and Truth" (The Bible: John 4, Psalm 4). But, then there are the spirits all around us; some are even accessible to our easy communication and guidance! Miracles and mysterious ways of operation of these spirits are

experienced in our daily life, but we have no clue as to what these invisible forces are. Ancient Wisdom has a whole lot of literature on this aspect of the 'Spirit' and the 'Soul'. In fact, Spirit is the basis of our life and we are all maintained and guided by the 'Spirits', the "Spirit of the Soul." We live, rather exist, in our true 'Spirit of the Soul.'

Thus, it may be concluded that the Supreme Lord expands Himself and, also creates positions of gods and goddesses, numerous other deities, the angels, the Gandharvas and the Kinnaras, the sages and the saints, the 'pitr's' or the manes and all the children of God and their respective realms or spheres with objects of their desires within the material cosmos. This is a satisfactory explanation that is rational, scientific, as well as, spiritual. Shri Aurobindo says, "The Universal creation is but an expansion or a development from the original spiritual elements. These existed prior to, during and after the material creation." The Universe started in a state of perfect simplicity. The design of this Universe has emanated from an unknown dimension. It is a dimension of ultimate cause and simplicity, which is spiritual in nature rather than material. It is from this dimension that all the other dimensions such as Consciousness, space, time, causality, has been evolved. In fact, space has been created automatically as and when the consciousness filled it and expanded it. Time has evolved out of space and distance and, both merge into Consciousness. Causality that appears to have created the material objective world is just a virtual reality without substance. Thus, material is the manifest of the unmanifest spirit. The blue prints of the Universe and all life forms within lie in the Vedic Literature.

The energies of matter and spirit are the energies that vibrate at different frequencies and manifest on different levels.

Both originate from the same source of Consciousness - the Pure Consciousness of the Supreme Being. The material plane is pervaded by the unlimited spiritual energy. Matter is subservient to spirit; while matter is temporary, spirit is permanent. The Physical Universe is pervaded by spiritual energy that supports, sustains and dissolves it in a well- conceived divine plan. The ocean of Consciousness is permanent and the waves of material objects of the universe are temporary; these serve a certain divine purpose and disappear. Finally everything is wrapped up to merge into the spiritual atmosphere. Ultimately, it leads us to believe that everything is the make-believe, illusory world- Thought- force, ('cit') of the Lord.

But, the question still remains. What is this human soul?

The scientists have shown half the way to the secrets of the external world. They have done this with imagination, perseverance, hard work, determination. They have proof. They have studied matter and matter is found in gaseous, solid, and liquid states. But, the scientists cannot explain what makes them (the different elements) what they are? For instance, what makes nitrogen, oxygen, or hydrogen, what it is? At best, one may say, it is its distinctive characteristic nature, properties of matter, that distinguish each of them as such and such. Beyond that, it is all silence, just SILENCE. This Silence is the answer to all the above questions. There is Absolute Silence at the depth of our understanding. When we do not know something, we keep quiet, so also, when we know. When we know 'THAT', we keep quiet. Whoever KNOWS IT, or 'THAT' becomes SILENT. 'Tat' or 'THAT' is the 'Sat', the TRUTH. This field of SILENCE is the Unified Field, the Field of Samhita (Total Knowledge); it is spiritual knowledge. It is different from physical or material sciences because the scientists study the objects,

the matter and energy in physical sciences and the subject matter of spiritual science is the Subject itself, not the objects. We want to know who is behind all this diverse world of objects. In spiritual science or Vedic Literature (there are forty of them), the scientists are the visionaries, Seekers, or Rishis, who go to the depth of SILENCE of Creation in their state of supreme Consciousness in nirvikalpa Samadhi visualize the Creator at work! Since the spiritual scientist observes the Spirit, and not matter, what they visualize become inexplicable and remain only as experience. Once the secret is known, the answer is experienced by a person of great spiritual attainment, he needs no proof. He knows the TRUTH. Since the TRUTH is inexplicable, it cannot be explained in any manner, by sounds or words. It, the experience, remains a non transferable personal experience. Anybody can go to that depth of Silence and experience the TRUTH. Even the scientists become silent when they reach this state of understanding.

This search for Truth is the main goal of all scientists. The spiritual science has a set of rules and it is extremely difficult to follow them strictly and as such, it is extremely difficult to reach the final stages of spiritual development. So also, in physical or material sciences, the study of any subject, as a matter of fact, is not very easy. The material sciences or biological sciences, too, have a set of conditions. Only a few scientists succeed in achieving their goal. Ultimately the goal, or search, is the same. It is the truth, the ultimate 'TRUTH'. But, there is a difference here. In material or biological sciences, the study of matter is objective. It is the study of an object and they want to know about the objects their structure, composition, function, behaviour, and changes. But, in spiritual sciences, they go beyond all these objective studies and reach the Subject, the Creator of the object. In material science, there is the object seen and

the seeker, and both remain separate. But, in spiritual science, there is the seeker or the Seer (Rishi), the seen (Chhandas) and the two become united as one by means of an illumining principle, 'Devata'. All the three are united to become one in Totality, SAMHITA. Thereafter, neither the seeker (Subject) nor the sought, i.e., the Object, remains separate. In spiritual studies, both the subject and the object are involved and ultimately only 'KNOWLEDGE' remains; while in material sciences the study is only objective and both the seeker and the matter studied remain separate. Here, UNITY is missing and all the scientists are actually in search of this UNITY without which their study remains incomplete. Hence, all scientific studies are said to be incomplete. It is the holistic, or complete or 'WHOLENESS' that is important in the pursuit of KNOWLEDGE. This is achieved by spiritual studies combined with paractical exercises.

Now, it is clear that we are searching for a holistic, complete, TRUTH that is not wavering, fleeting, or changing but permanent, that holds good for all time to come. We are searching for this 'TRUTH' at the core of the material substance of this objective world. This is the greatest problem. We are searching for the Truth that does not exist in the material objects of the external world for the simple reason that the material world itself is ever-changing, fleeting, unreal, and not permanent. It is like searching for a black cat (that is not there) in a dark room. Unfortunately, the scientists tend to dismiss this as mere 'philosophy' and hold that 'does not come within the domain of science.' It is here that the scientists are mistaken. Any search for wholesome knowledge, Truth, should consider all aspects of the study from all possible angles. Unless the study includes both the subject and the object, the study remains incomplete. Further, there are three methods of study- the

material or physical, the logical or philosophical, and the spiritual. Whatever hold good in all these three fields is the real KNOWLEDGE, the Complete KNOWLEDGE, the WHOLE TRUTH, called 'sat' in Sanskrit. There is another argument of the scientists. They consider that the search for Truth should be objective only since the subject is abstract and it cannot be studied in the field of material sciences or biological sciences. But, it must be remembered that, any search for truth must be objective as well as Subjective and it must pass the test of scientific inquiry, universal application, logical and philosophical scrutiny, and religious and spiritual approval. All these three approaches are important.

The study of the 'abstract' is the most difficult subject that one can ever attempt. It is a riddle. The learned Sages say, 'it is knowable but not known.' He who says 'I know', knows not it, and he who says, 'knows not', knows it. First of all, it is abstract and second, it is not very easy to understand the deeper hidden aspects of the study. It is beyond our reach. It is Infinite and Abstract. It is silent. It is vast, deep and expansive beyond reach. It is so subtle that it is almost impossible to know it. Some learned Sages go to the extent of saying, 'it is not unknowable; even if it is knowable, it is not known as yet.' Some sages say, 'it is not knowable.' Because, once it is known, it becomes an 'entity' known and THAT abstract supreme power is not an 'entity' ever to be known. It is only to be experienced at higher level of super consciousness. Only a few sages have ever known this. Sages like Shuka, Raikva, Vemana, Ashtaavakra, Naarada, Kapila, Jaimini, Veda Vyaasa and a few others have come to 'know' of this, rather have experienced this. They are the few Knowledgeable persons from whom we now get some idea of the unknowable. One may ask, 'How can you know the 'Knowable, but not Known'? 'Shrutis' say that

the 'Knowable but not Known so far', can be experienced by the Knowledge of the Veda, the breath of 'Brahm'. The 'Veda Vaani', Shruti and Smriti conveyed to us by the Great Indian Sages as described in the ancient scriptures of India; they contain all the secrets of this supreme Knowledge and it is an invaluable gift handed over to us. In brief, it is just an attempt to know the so called 'unknowable', the subtle, abstract, Silent, and the Infinite. Since there is no name to it, it is simply called 'THAT', 'Tat' in Sanskrit. That is the Truth "Om, Tat sat" as they put it in the Ancient Scriptures of India (ASI).

To be continued

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Light, form, colour, sound etc. are some of the varieties of religious experience. Form may be illustrated in the experience of the sesa (the thousand hooded serpent on whose coils Lord Vishu rests) and light in the experience of the sun and the moon. There are experiences of different colour and sounds. Even a little experience gained by meditation on the name imparted by the spiritual teacher is able to lead us to the final goal. However, making the beginning is not easy. Once the name has been imparted by the spiritual teacher, it is the aspirant who has to strive. It is essential to have the company of the good, though it may be for a short while.

- Gurudeo Ranade

Suprabhata To Sri Sadgurunatha

“एळु सदगुरुनाथ ”

(The Kannada Poem composed by
Sri. Joshi (Tikoti) in the Devanagari Script)

एळु सदगुरुनाथ एळु करुणानिधे ।
एळु नी उमदीश जगदीशनय्या ॥प॥
जगदोळगे दृश्य अवतारवनु धरिसिदि ।
सर्व धर्मद मर्म तिळिसिकोट्टी ॥
वेदके निलकद दर्शनवु तोरिदि ।
गुरुदेव नी यन्ननु धन्य माडिदी ॥१॥
गुरुविनिंदले भक्ति गुरुविनिंदले मुक्ति ।
गुरुविनिंदले सहज परमेशप्राप्ति ॥
गुरुदेव निन्न होतु अन्यदेवरु याके ।
गुरुविन दय ओंदु इदरे साके ॥२॥
धन्य गुरुदेवने, धन्य उमदीशने ।
धन्य नी सधर्मप्रतिपालकने ॥
धन्य निन्न भक्तरु आरुतिय बेळगुवरु ।
भक्ततारक गुरुवे वेगने एळय्या ॥३॥

Rise O Sadgurunatha, the Ocean of mercy,
Get Thee up, O Umadisha, the Lord of the Cosmos.

Embellish'd art Thou in the visible form here in this world,
Reveal'd me the mysteries taught in the tenets of all religions.

Shown me Isha invisible even to the Vedas,
Made me bless'd one indeed O Gurudeva;
Rise O Sadgurunatha, the ocean of mercy.

Through none but a guru is devotion and liberation,
Through none but a guru is the attainment of Lord Superme;
Why then should I look for other gods O Gurudeva?
Would only the grace of Guru adequate enough?
Rise O Sadgurunatha, the ocean of mercy.

Fortunate art Thou O Gurudeva, the Lord of Umadi,
Fortunate are Thou the guardian of the righteous living,
Fortunate art Thy devotees who perform aarti to Thee;
Rise O Gurudeva at once, the Liberator of the devotees;
Rise O Sadgurunatha, The ocean of mercy.

Transcreated by :

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Meditation is possible only as physical pain is endurable but when it gets beyond endurance, meditation is not possible. So one should carry on meditation as long as health is good enough for it and at the same time may be God that when pain gets beyond endurance, He should, by His grace, keep His memory alive in our mind. There is no other remedy to remember God in excessive physical pain. Shri Baba appears to have conquered physical pain as could be seen from his condition at the time of his passing away.

- Gurudeo Ranade

(Continued from last issue)

Bhagwadgeeta & its exposition

by Sant Dnyaneshwar

Chapter IX (राजविद्याराजगुह्ययोग)

The Supreme Knowledge and the Sovereign Secret Mystery

(Sanskrit Script followed by English Translation)

ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाप्यन्ये यजन्तो मामुपासते ।
एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतोमुखम् ॥१५॥

Some others worship Me with Knowledge sacrifice as the infinite One, the distinct as well as the manifold facing the world in all directions, in various ways.

Sant Dnyaneshwar explains :

If you ask me what are the medications of a knowledge sacrifice, & will say, it is mainly that the experience and firm view in the mind that Brahma exists in different forms every where. The firm view itself is the main pillar of sacrifice, the five main elements Panchamahabhutas are the covering structure for the sacrifice, the five senses (five indriyas) and the five Pranas (Panchpranas) are the materials for the sacrifice. In the sacrifice, the mind and the intelligence are the two homa-kundas (the square receptacles formed by bricks), in which the fire of knowledge is kindled. The equanimity of mind in pleasure and pain is the strong and firm altar of the sacrifice. The discriminating power of the intelligence between good and evil becomes the mantras of the sacrifice. The importance of knowledge and learning the ladles for pouring ghee in the sacrifice and the self that is Jeeva is

the person doing the sacrifice. The utensils used form the thoughts of Brahma and the experience the Maha-mantras. The Person doing the sacrifice, takes the help of the Agnihotra Karma and burns the difference between the Jeeva and Ishwar (self and God) through the offerings. When this happens the doer of sacrifice and the action of sacrifice appear to have come to a stop and when the doer takes the Avabhruth bath (cleansing bath at the end of sacrifice) in the milk of the union of brahma and jeeva, the difference between the five elements words, touch, desire and senses disappear and he feels they are all one in Brahma. Oh Arjuna, like a man awakened from sleep, says that the colourful army he saw in the dream was in himself due to sleep and was not the same he saw on the battlefield. Likewise, man who has realised that Brahma occupies all forms in the world, does not behave as a separate self or Jeeva. He understands that from Brahmadeo to the blade of grass, the soul is the same. Accordingly those who have realised Me due to Dnyana Yadna worship Me accordingly. Thus though there are a variety of names, shapes and forms in the world there is no difference in their understanding knowledge of Me as the Soul everywhere. For a person has different limbs to his body, but he knows that the body is the same one entity. Therefore, Oh Arjuna, those who have adopted the knowledge sacrifice well in their experience and view, see Me everywhere and worship Me as the indivisible One in all in this world. A bubble in water, wherever it may go but still is part of the water. Even if it disappears, it remains in water only. The sun is the same for the whole world though it is seen by different people at different times and at night it is not seen in some places in the world. The air fills the whole sky, but the breezes are different at different places. Thus those who have performed the knowledge sacrifice, see Me everywhere and worship Me accordingly. My worship goes on at many places

but many people see Me different at differently places and they find difficulty in realising Me. All the worships reach Me from different directions but those who have no proper understanding of My existence are unable to reach Me.

अहंऋतुरहं यज्ञः अहंस्वधाऽहमौषधम् ।
मन्त्रोऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निरहं हुतम् ॥१६॥

I am the ritual action, I am the sacrifice, I am the ancestral oblations, I am the medicinal herb, I am the sacred hymn, I am the fire and I am the offering.

Sant Dnyaneshwar explains :

When that knowledge (Myself being in all things in world) dawns, I am the Vedas, I am the rituals mentioned in Vedas, I am the sacrifice set forth from the rituals, I am the mantras required for giving oblations to devas, I am the mantras for giving the oblations to the ancestors, I am the variety of medicinal herbs, I am the ghee to be poured in the fire, I am the fire as well as the various offerings to be put in the fire.

पिताऽहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामहः ।
वेद्यं पवित्रमोँकार ऋक्सामयजुरेव च ॥१७॥

I am the father of this world, the mother, the supporter, and grandfather. I am the object of knowledge, the purifier, I am the syllable Om and I am the Rk, the Sāma and the Yajur as well.

Sant Dnyaneshwar explains :

Because of whose original action, the eight-sided Prakṛti brought forth the world, that father I am, In form of Ardha-narīnāteshwar, I am the women and also the man. Accordingly I am the mother of this world. The space where the created world stays and how the beings are protected in the world, is doubtless

because of Me. Prakrti and Purush are both created in the formless state from the Universal self that is Me as the grandsire of the whole universe. Oh Arjuna, the place where all the paths of knowledge meet, the platform of four Vedas is called Vedyā, the object of knowledge. That place where various branches of knowledge came together and got united in understanding that is known as ‘Pavitra’. Oh Arjuna, the original seed of Brahma grew the four buds of Para, Pashyanti, Madhyama and Vaikhari as the four forms of utterances and these then merged into the Onkar, which is Myself alone. From this Onkar the letters अ, उ and म् got created and with them grew the three Vedas Rk, Yaju and Sāma. I am the three Vedas and also various branches these developed further.

गतिर्भर्ता प्रभुःसाक्षी निवासः शरणं सुहृत् ।

प्रभवः प्रलयः स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम् ॥१८॥

I am the goal, upholder, the lord, the witness, the abode, the refuge and the friend, I am the origin, the dissolution, the foundation, the resting place and the immutable seed.

Sant Dnyaneshwar explains :

The movable and immovable world is inside the Prakrti and when this Prakrti is tired she rests some where and that best resting place is Myself. The savior of the Prakrti and under whose refuge it brings forth the world, and who under the influence of the same Prakrti, creates and enjoys the three attributes of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas is Me, the Lord of the whole universe. Under My orders the sky occupies the whole space, the air does not take rest for a moment, Fire should always burn, the clouds should bring rain, the mountains should never move from their location, the seas should not overreach their boundaries and the earth should always carry the burden of all animate and inanimate world. The Vedas talk when I invite

them, the sun moves under my bidding, The Pran-shakti which moves the world is moved by Me and when I order the death it grasps the beings. Oh Arjuna, thus all the action and movements take place implicitly under My orders. This all powerful Lord of the universe, Myself, pervades all the universe like the sky and remain a witness to all that happens in world. Accordingly, Oh Arjuna, I pervade all the animate and inanimate world in different forms and am also their protector and savior. As the waves are in water and water is in the waves. Likewise I am in the world and the world is in Me. Thus I am the resting place of the whole world. Those who take refuge in Me, I liberate them from the cycle of births and rebirths and am the protector of all those who take refuge in Me. Though the Prakriti possesses different attributes I am one though I keep all the beings with different after bates of the Prakrti alive through the Prana-Shakti. The Sun does not differentiate between the small pond or a big lake when it is reflected in them, likewise I am dear to all beings from the small mosquito to Brahmadeo. Oh Arjuna, all the life in this universe is Me and I am the cause of its origin, its steady state as well as its dissolution. The tree, branches and the fruit all originate from the seed and ultimately again enter the seed form. Likewise, My will for origin of universe, creates the same with all the variety of beings and inanimate world and again the whole thing dissolves in My will. The place where the whole universe dissolves is in Me only. To create the whole world again, the gods and deities stay invisible with the desire to participate in the creation of the world, in Me only.

(To be continued)

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Ramchandra to Gurudev

A Pilgrim's Progress

[Biography of Gurudeo Ranade]

We will first see the panorama of his spiritual experience then turn to his apostleship.

Once Gurudev made a statement, in this connection, which far surpassed his previous statements. He said: "Through the grace of Sri Maharaj, we have experience altogether different from all the recorded experiences of all the saints of the world."

Spiritual experiences are after all experiences of the Infinite. Hence they are bound to be infinite. There can be finality 'about them. "*Yasyantam na viduh surassura-ganah*" - "His depth has not been fathomed even by the gods and demons." What to speak of other morals? But Gurudev never revealed what those experiences were.

Gurudev was relating some of his experiences to the seekers up to about 1920. After that, he never spoke about them up to 1940, during which period he observed discreet silence about them. It was only after 1940 that he gradually began to make occasional references to some of his earlier experiences, in the presence of his closest friends, as well as in his later works, and that too not directly, but in a suggestive manner.

As Gurudev had enjoyed direct spiritual experiences, he could understand properly the essence, the exact nature, the

width, depth and height, of the experiences of all the saints. He could, therefore, describe them with faithful accuracy and exactness. Those who have not realised these experiences obviously cannot do proper justice to them.

Phonic Experiences

Gurudev had experience of chorus of several musical instruments. At Nimbal village, he heard a terrific sound. Gurudev used to tell that in such terrible spiritual experiences there is a combination as well as a competition of the feelings of joy and fear. In this connection he used to refer to the experience of Arjuna described in the following verse of the Gita:

Adrstapurvam hrsitosmi drstva
Bhayenaca pravyathitam mano me.

“I was delighted to see the vision which I had never seen before, but it inspired in my mind with mortal fear:”

Gurudev has described another personal experience of this type in his book on the *Gita*:

“Here we can only cite a parallel from the experience of a modern mystic who described himself as absolutely powerless even to lift his hand from his heart in mortal fear and exclaimed that it would have been much better if he had not been privileged to have that experience. There was terrific fear inside, no doubt, but there was also at the same time abounding joy. He wanted to have a revision of that experience over again but re-visions are not in man’s hands and one has to leave them to the sweet will of God.” (BG 273/274).

Gurudev had also experienced super-sensuous words. We have seen how he heard different names such as Datta; Digambar. He thereafter heard, in the *dharmasala* of Bardole a village near

Nimbargi, an Islamic name of God. He once heard the words "Jharatustra! Jharatustra!" and saw the prophet of the Parsis. At that time Sri Gurudev asked Sri Karkhanis whether the prophet of the Parsis, rode an old camel. In 1954, when the problem of initiating Dr. De Marquette, -D. Litt- the great savant of France- arose, Gurudev told Tulpule, that the Christian name was with him, for a long time. This shows that Gurudev had heard it also long ago.

One day, a young daughter of one of his intimate disciple sang the following abhang of Sri Tukaram

"Vithal Vithal gajari, avaghi dumadumali Pandhari"

"The whole Pandharpur was resounding with the sound Vithal, Vithal"

"O what a bliss! The Pandhari of my body was surcharged with the sound 'Vithal Vithal!' Really your lovely little child is blessed!" exclaimed Gurudev.

Spiritual Flavour

Gurudev appears to have enjoyed the flavour of spiritual nectar a little late in his life. This is what he has stated about the experience :

"We have to note that this Divine Juice cannot be obtained except at the price of desperate devotion to God. A great deal of torture and trouble must be experienced before one gets a small quantity of this juice." It is a well known fact that Gurudev was living on tea for a good many years. How could tea alone supply all the elements of nutrition required by this body? Whence was he having the requisite energy for carrying on properly his multifarious intellectual activities? This was an enigma for which he replied, "I can tap other source of energy!"

Sudarshana - Spiritual Wheel

Gurudev has graphically described the spiritual wheel in one of his works. A glance at the extract of that description given below will easily convince any one that it cannot but be the description of an eyewitness.

“This wheel is a matter of experience and not of description. As in the case of a fire-fly its light serves to terrify, to protect and to attract, in the case of the Mystical Wheel also, we may say, it terrifies, protects and attracts.... It may be described in the shape of one circle or a number of concentric circles with or without spokes. The light with which it is filled, and by means of which it becomes radiant, easily resolved itself into a number of colours, according to the wont of the physical law. The sparking colours have been described as *Abhinava Navarang* as going beyond any description of such symbols as ‘*Vibgyor*’. Its sound has been described by Kabir, as the Saint of Umadi told us *Gui Gui Gui bole...* As regards its motion, one does not allow what to say about it.... It moves and it does not move; “it is both far and near it is both inside and outside of man. It is this Mystical Wheel that is at the back of all the wheels that might be constructed by man.” (M. G. 28)

A Golden Asvattha

Gurudev, one day, came out of his morning meditation, at Allahabad, in an ecstatic mood and asked one of his disciples to read the abhang of Jnanesvar about Golden Asvattha and explain the first line of the same which ran like this :

जयाचिया द्वारी सोन्याचा पिंपळ ।

“Before whose doorway stands a golden peepal.” The disciple could only give its ordinary meaning. Thereupon Gurudev emphatically declared: “No, that is not its meaning. The phrase

'golden peepal' is not a mere metaphor. It is an actual experience. When I am actually witnessing in front of my door an *Asvattha*, shining with a brilliance million times superior to that of gold, how much more brilliant must have been the an *Asvatta*¹ which Sri Jnanesvar, Sri Tukaram and Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj had witnessed before! It can better be imagined than described. In fact, it cannot be described, at all. Its resemblance with gold is more formal than real. Really, no object in the world is analogically fit for being compared with this experience. Gold is a very insignificant material for being compared with the brilliance of the spiritual experience of this form."

Visions of Deities

When Gurudev was residing in Adhyatma Bhavan, one day, he began to move round the Bhavan. Sri Karkhanis who was with him there asked him the reason for his circumambulation. Gurudev replied, "Well, I saw today the lustrous form of Sri Sesa moving round my residence. He was shining like anything. Hence I followed him." He also saw there, one day, Sri Hanuman with a brilliant flame-coloured face. Fortunately, his subsequent enquiry revealed that it was the anniversary (jayanti) day of Sri Hanuman.

At the time of the *Amrta mahotsava* at Jamkhandi, Gurudev had a wonderful vision. When *arati* was in progress in the Ramesvara temple, he saw that he was playing on the lap of God, like a son playing on the lap of his father. This vision threw him into transports of bliss.

(to be continued...)

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